SITE SPECIFIC PRACTICES AND CITY RENEWAL
The Geo-Politics of Hotel Installations in Urban Spaces

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in conformity with the requirements for
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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my deceased father Richard Thomas Veitch whose unwavering work ethic and personal integrity inspired me to achieve my goals and ambitions in life. I am grateful for all the ways that he supported my decisions and accomplishments with his patience, commitment and respect which he offered open heartedly until his untimely passing.
Abstract

This dissertation examines site specific works produced in hotel buildings by exploring the multiple and contending narratives which gave meaning to city spaces where divergent communities lived, worked and socialized. I analyze the ways in which artists altered urban sites on a visual, sensorial and perceptual levels by focusing on installations produced in three hotels from 1980 to the present: the Embassy Hotel in London, Ontario, and the Cameron House and the Gladstone Hotel in Toronto, Ontario. By facilitating critical interventions in these architectural spaces, artists responded to the conflicting agendas of varying constituencies—from city planners and artists to hotel owners and residents. These commercial establishments, which combined bars, cafés, performance venues, galleries and room rentals, demonstrate the ways in which art and cultural production reflect broader social patterns and urban life: economic shifts, questions of diversity, activist struggles, consumerism, unemployment, and community. In addition to providing spaces for creative practices and art installations, the hotels each went through a series of renovations, transforming the once derelict buildings where low income tenants formerly resided into gentrified buildings, thus changing the social, symbolic and historical significance of the architectural sites.

Working across these complex socio-spatial patterns creative communities re-envisioned urban geographies through contemporary art practices which impacted how and why people perceived, conceived and experienced the surrounding environment. By producing and exhibiting works in city spaces artists participated in urban regeneration in the local neighborhoods of London and Toronto; yet this was necessarily coupled with gentrification, and the displacement of local residents (including creative communities and people living in poverty) who could not afford rental increases. I evaluate the critical
aesthetics shaping site specific installations by drawing attention to the contradictions and
tensions underlying city revitalization which concurrently enabled and disenabled
community formations. I argue that artists contended with the geo-politics of
identification, dis-identification, belonging and unbelonging by negotiating differing
subject positions through which tenants and workers made claims to property rights and
ownership. They produced what Michel Foucault referred to as “heteropias” by
representing, contesting and inverting the hotel sites, thus creatively and critically
engaging with – rather then simply supporting or opposing – the paradoxical possibilities
of urban regeneration (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 24).
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Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation examines site specific art produced in hotel buildings by exploring the multiple and contending narratives which gave meaning to city spaces where divergent communities lived, worked and socialized. I analyze the ways in which artists altered urban sites on a visual, sensorial and perceptual levels by focusing on installations produced in three hotels from 1980 to the present: the Embassy Hotel in London, Ontario, and the Cameron House and the Gladstone Hotel in Toronto, Ontario. I chose to focus on these hotels because they included permanent site specific works which remained in the buildings over an extended period of time. The installations thus took on changing meaning in the ongoing historical narratives surrounding the architectural sites.1

In organizing exhibition projects, the artists worked with the proprietors of the buildings who developed and sustained ongoing and continued relationships with neighborhood communities.

Whereas commercial hotels formed part of corporate development schemes and depended upon profit driven economies, the establishments which I examine were family operated businesses which explored alternative approaches to entrepreneurship by working with art collectives and cultural organizations. By producing, exhibiting and distributing installations in these buildings, artists negotiated the overlapping and at times conflicting objectives of the varying constituencies who lived and worked on the premises. I analyze in the ways in which these architectural sites functioned as “cultural

1 Dominion Hotel, in Vancouver, British Columbia and Drake Hotel in Toronto, Ontario also invited artists to produce long term installations in the buildings. These site specific works differed from temporary installations which existed in architectural spaces for a limited duration. Artists changed the content and form of the pieces as they relocated them from one site to another. Some hotels which hosted short term site specific projects in Canada from 1990 to the present include: Duke of Connaught Hotel, Toronto; and Delta Hotels in London, Ontario and Montreal, Quebec. In 1993 the artist run centre, Chambre Blanche also organized installation projects at various hotels in Quebec City for the exhibition Chambres d’Hôtel.
community centres”\(^2\) in the downtown core by facilitating and mobilizing processes of exchange between and among the various inhabitants who resided in the surrounding neighborhood.

In maintaining the premises the owners not only tended to the needs of the clients and patrons, but they also responded to urbanization in the sectors of London and Toronto where their businesses were located. These city regions underwent different degrees of de-industrialization and regeneration which impacted communities in the nearby vicinity who both supported and opposed city planning schemes. Local inhabitants protested revitalization processes which resulted in the polarization of impoverished districts and gentrified neighborhoods. These urban renewal projects negatively impacted low income tenants who middle class constituencies pushed out as they moved into localities which government and corporate organizations rehabilitated. In examining the historical context within which artists produced hotel installations, I propose that they re-envisioned neighborhood districts which became sites of contestation as people contended with gentrification. Artists re-articulated structures of inclusion and exclusion which extended from the architectural spaces where they engaged in creative practices to the surrounding city centres where residents and workers asserted and contested property rights and ownership in the downtown core.

My dissertation then is interested in the ways in which site specific art reflected broader socio-spatial processes in particular geographic locations. Within city spaces, artists explored and creatively contributed to the social, symbolic and historical

\(^2\) Bruce Barber used the term “cultural community centre” to refer in particular to the Embassy Hotel where artists engaged in social praxis by establishing rapport with the owners, staff and tenants (Barber 36-38). I use this definition to describe all three hotels which served as meeting places for artists, residents and workers, thus enabling familial and community affiliations.
significance of the architectural sites through their installations. They changed the function and design of the buildings by combining together paintings, sculptures, videos, textile works, ceramics, furniture and performances. By incorporating various media into the surrounding environment, they altered the architectural spaces, thus re-positioning and re-locating the viewers in relationship to the exhibition sites. They blurred the boundaries between art, film, craft and design through their works which assimilated images, sounds, and movement, thus evoking physical, emotive and psychical responses in the audiences who visited their shows.

Throughout my dissertation I establish site specific practices and installation art as interchangeable creative acts. There are slight variations between these two different types of works. Artists created site specific exhibitions for private and public spaces\(^3\), and when they removed the pieces from these locations, they lost their meaning. That is to say that the form and content of the art was dependent upon the context in which the artists produced the work. By comparison installations refer more generally to pieces *integrated* into exhibition sites. The works either continued around the spaces where artists placed them or contrasted with the background architecture. Installation art did not necessarily borrow its subject matter and structural design from the surrounding building. Hence artists modified and re-adapted the pieces when they moved them from one gallery to another.

\(^3\) There are a number of writings on public art which distinguish between the site where artists located their works and the community audiences with whom artists engaged throughout the duration of their projects. For example Tom Finkelpearl suggests that artists disrupted urban space by developing interventionist strategies (Finkelpearl, “The City as Site”, 24-45). By contrast Suzanne Lacy discusses ‘new genre public art’ which refers to community based projects. In creating these works, artists established collaborative networks of exchange with people of differing ethno-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (Lacy, “Cultural Pilgrimages and Metaphoric Journeys”, 19-47). I argue that creative communities reformulated social and political processes by producing site specific works. In developing this theoretical approach, I examine the complexities of hotel installations which intersected public and private spaces where differing constituencies interacted.
In examining hotel exhibitions, I re-conceptualize current writings on installations and site specific practices. Contemporary theorists distinguish between these two different approaches by describing the ways in which artists re-interpreted the meaning and context of the buildings where they produced and displayed their works. For instance, historical texts on installation exhibitions suggest that artists changed how and why viewers perceived and experienced the architectural sites. Artists created works which explored various themes, concepts and ideas as informed by their own theoretical concerns and technical processes. They re-imagined the building interiors and exteriors by re-interpreting the personal and political narratives shaping people’s understanding of urban localities. In this way they revealed the multiple and at times contradictory ideologies embedded within the history of the architecture where they located their pieces.

Alternately writings on site specific works analyze the institutional structures of power and knowledge that artists negotiated throughout the various stages of planning and implementing their projects. This methodological approach focuses on the curatorial, governmental and administrative demands which artists contended with by circulating and distributing their pieces within and across different locations. While critical theorists importantly address the political and economic infrastructure surrounding art practices, they place site specific works within the context of museum

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institutions which organized city wide exhibitions. Hence these texts focus on gallery
mandated projects which remained circumscribed within critical art discourse.

By contrast I connect cultural production with city renewal schemes by analyzing
the geo-politics of gentrification. I examine the socio-spatial processes which artists re-
articulated by engaging in creative interventions in urban spaces. Rather than separating
site specific exhibitions and installations, I link these two different approaches in order to
emphasize the ways in which such art practices, together, disrupted the cityscape. I re-
interpret historical literature on contemporary art by analyzing cross-disciplinary theories
which explore the intersection of critical aesthetics and geographies of resistance. I argue
that artists reformulated institutional and community affiliations by producing site
specific installations which altered the surrounding architecture. They redefined city
spaces by participating in interventionist strategies in the downtown core, thus subverting
urbanization processes which determined the boundaries and limits of residential districts,
cultural corridors and business sectors.

In examining site specific practices in the context of city development, I focus on
artists who engaged in political aesthetics. I analyze installation exhibitions in hotel
buildings where artists participated in creative art projects by exploring various
methodological approaches and theoretical frameworks. While acknowledging the
plurality of site specific works created in these architectural spaces, I narrow down my
study by discussing in particular critical interventions which addressed social concerns.
That is to say that I analyze installation artists who addressed political issues through their
works by examining a broad range of themes including post colonialism, feminism, gay
activism and environmentalism. In describing their art I argue that they developed critical
aesthetics in public urban sites, thus disrupting city revitalization which served
government and administrative institutions. I consider the ways in which artists intervened in the production of space by participating in social movements which gave voice to politics of dissent, thus undermining the bureaucratization of the downtown core.

Douglas Crimp discusses political aesthetics and site specific installations in his analysis of Richard Serra’s work, *Tilted Arc* (1981-1989). The piece comprised a large scale steel sculpture which Serra located on a public plaza in New York City. Crimp argues that Serra disrupted city beautification schemes through which government and corporate organizations controlled and monitored the financial district where he situated his piece (150-154, 174-182). Serra redirected the movements of people through the square, thus re-positioning them in relation to the high rise buildings located along the outer edges of the courtyard. It was precisely because the work remapped and circumvented the existing pathways that government representatives petitioned for its removal in 1989. According to Crimp the ensuing court case provided evidence of the contestations over public urban space which increasingly came under the management of corporations. He argues that Serra redefined “the site of the work of art as the site of political struggle” (182).

Serra engaged in critical aesthetics by borrowing from abstract modernist discourse. More specifically *Tilted Arc* (1981-1989) recalled the works made by Minimal artists who produced geometrical paintings and sculptures which they displayed in a sequence on the walls and floors of galleries. Although Serra reacted against museum practices by moving into public city spaces, he engaged in interventionist strategies by separating himself from the communities who inhabited the sites where he exhibited his work. As Miwon Kwon reveals, the exclusionist selection process surrounding the initial competition for the sculpture design served to alienate the people who worked in the
surrounding buildings (78-83). Site specific art both de-institutionalized and re-institutionalized urban districts by simultaneously subverting and re-inscribing competing hierarchical structures of power.

Developing Kwon’s arguments, I suggest that Serra re-articulated the geo-politics of city development in ways that were both disruptive and conformist. He re-politicized urban geographies by serving particularized audiences, meanwhile precluding other constituencies who used city spaces. In order to further clarify the continuities between cultural production and urbanization processes, I distinguish between aestheticized politics as practiced by Serra and politicized aesthetics as enacted by artists who resisted city development. Whereas Serra reinforced elitist art discourse, community based artists engaged in oppositional movements by destabilizing urban governance. More specifically they dismantled geographies of power by giving voice to protest movements.

Martha Rosler develops concepts of critical aesthetics in urban spaces by examining political activism in local neighborhoods. Focusing on the Lower East Side in New York City she suggests that artists opposed the class inequities underlying urbanization. Rosler proposes that corporate developers gentrified city districts by replacing low income housing with condominiums. Government cutbacks in social programs on a municipal and national level further contributed to the increase in the homeless population (20-30). According to Rosler artists opposed existing regimes of power by participating in exhibitions which included anti-poverty coalitions. They produced videos, photographs and texts which documented and recorded their

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6 According to Kwon the local government sponsored the competition and chose art professionals as members of the jury. The board of committee thus comprised a panel of experts who reinforced elitist notions of taste as established within contemporary art discourse (Kwon 80-81).
interactions with street people. Creative communities displayed their works in galleries alongside activist groups, thus undermining museum ideology which established exhibition sites as hermetic spaces separated from street life. Rosler situates the galleries in the gentrified neighborhood of the Lower East Side and suggests that artists critiqued urban development in this sector of the city by protesting processes of displacement that negatively impacted socially marginalized tenants (31-42).

Rosler develops theories on political aesthetics by examining oppositional movements which redressed the power imbalances underlying urban renewal. Neil Smith similarly argues that artists participated in practices of resistance by destabilizing structures of inclusion and exclusion surrounding gentrification. Focusing on city revitalization in the Lower East Side, he describes the uneven distribution of wealth and power within and across urban localities. He suggests that international corporations invested in real estate markets thus driving up property values. The resulting relocation of people living in poverty led to political contestations between government officials and homeless coalitions. In examining the tensions and conflicts underlying urban renewal, Smith proposes that artists engaged in local acts of struggle by responding to the needs of economically disenfranchised communities (Smith, "Homeless/Global: Scaling Places", 87-95, 114-115).

Neil Smith focuses on Krzysztof Wodiczko’s Homeless Vehicle (1988) which was comprised of a pushcart with various compartments for holding and storing personal items. Wodiczko designed the piece for street people who pushed around the vehicle as

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7 Rosler argues that creative communities disrupted negative stereotypes of homeless communities perpetuated through the media. They subverted journalistic photography which borrowed from ethnographic studies by making claims to the authentic truth. Artists lived and worked with economically disenfranchised residents who recounted their experiences living on the streets. They disrupted paradigms of representation which separated the viewer from the viewed by de-contextualizing and re-contextualizing histories of homelessness (Rosler 31-38).
they traveled from one sector of the city to another. According to Smith the work served the needs of homeless communities whom local authorities had evicted from public properties. He suggests that the art “promise[d] the concrete production and reproduction of geographical scale as a political strategy of resistance” (Smith, "Homeless/Global: Scaling Places", 90). Wodiczko disrupted gentrification by intervening in the institutionalization of city neighborhoods as implemented by government and corporate organizations. His work thus operated on several different levels by re-articulating the spatialization of politics through which people contested and asserted housing rights as defined through regional and national policies. Wodiczko disrupted capitalist development schemes which marginalized people living in poverty by establishing business districts as exclusive enclaves for the professional managerial class.

In examining Wodiczko’s Homeless Vehicle (1988), Smith indicates that artists opposed urban revitalization. It is precisely these political contestations which I analyze in my study of hotel installations. Artists developed critical aesthetics by protesting different levels of oppression including sexism, racism and homophobia which worked on various geographic scales to repress people from the private sphere of the home to public city spaces. By addressing these issues, they politicized the hotel spaces as sites of creative discord, thus changing the meaning and significance of the architecture. Further, they re-envisioned the downtown core where the buildings were located and mobilized cultural production in city neighborhoods. Although some artists have engaged in social protests, others have also renovated hotel buildings, thus participating in urban redevelopment in the surrounding areas which underwent different stages of de-

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8 Malcolm Miles similarly examines public urban art which disrupted gentrification schemes. He argues that creative communities engaged in processes of sociation by giving voice to community politics which challenged hegemonic ideologies (Miles 104-131, 164-187).
industrialization and gentrification. I situate the artists’ works in the context of city
degeneration and regeneration in order to examine the ways in which they re-articulated
the geo-politics of urbanization.

In some instances they produced site specific works in economically deprived
sectors of the cities where low income tenants resided. In other cases artists engaged in
cultural production in urban districts where neighborhood organizations, business
entrepreneurs and government departments assumed ownership over building properties.
According to Rosler and Smith these development schemes perpetuated class disparities
in city regions. Whereas Rosler and Smith argue that artists disrupted geographies of
urban revitalization, I propose that they negotiated a paradoxical position by engaging in
oppositional movements which both opened up spaces of radical dissent while displacing
economically disenfranchised communities who inhabited the downtown core. Unlike the
projects that Rosler and Smith analyze, the artists I discuss did not specifically address
issues of poverty and homelessness as precipitated by gentrification. However they did
engage in critical aesthetics by examining various social concerns and political debates as
informed by their own ideological approaches. In producing site specific installations they
gave voice to marginalized subjectivities by exploring differing racialized, sexualized and
gendered identities. They disrupted structures of inclusion and exclusion by re-inscribing
subaltern discourses in the architectural spaces where they located their works, thus
undermining existing hegemonies and radicalizing the hotel buildings as sites of critical
intervention.

Yet these artistic contestations occurred in urban sectors where people living in
poverty came up against processes of displacement as community collectives and
corporate organizations moved into the areas. While artists opposed these eviction
policies, they also implicated themselves in renovation schemes by occupying city spaces where low income tenants previously rented accommodations. Artists engaged in disruptive politics which both consolidated and undermined socio-spatial practices through which people re-articulated processes of identification, dis-identification, belonging and unbelonging. By producing installations in hotel buildings, they opened up critical art discourse to the differing ethno-cultural and socio-economic communities who inhabited the premises. They developed political aesthetics in accordance with criteria established by their peers and mentors who followed particular ways of thinking and living. Creative communities engaged with knowledge structures, gallery systems and theoretical disciplines that distinguished them from people living in poverty. Artists acquired cultural resources and funding which provided them with economic advantages unavailable to low income tenants. Thus they enabled and disenabled participatory processes of exchange which granted and denied residents and workers access to urban districts.

In developing this line of analysis I link Rosler and Smith’s discussion on the geopolitics of artistic interventions with contemporary discourses on political aesthetics. My theoretical inquiry then, is threefold: first, I propose that artists re-articulated geographies of power through which people made claims to local neighborhoods; second, I argue that they contended with multiple and at times conflicting political subjectivities by addressing the differing goals and objectives of the constituencies who lived and worked in urban localities; third, I examine the institutional and community affiliations surrounding installation exhibitions which facilitated strategies of resistance. In addressing these issues I explore the complex workings of power that operated within and across site specific projects and city revitalization.
Urban Activism and Art Communities

My theoretical and field research has shown that artists came up against conflicting agendas due to the ways in which residents and workers asserted and institutionalized claims to property rights and ownership. In examining the critical aesthetics shaping site specific practices I draw attention to the contradictions and tensions underlying urban regeneration which concurrently enabled and disenabled community formations. By community formations, I mean the differing subject positions through which people made claims to socio-cultural identities in urban districts. Throughout my dissertation I use the term ‘creative communities’ to refer specifically to artists, musicians, writers and theatre professionals who took various approaches to facilitating cultural production. I distinguish this concept from Richard Florida’s notion of the ‘creative class’ which describes artists, engineers, academics and technologists who contributed to the urban economy by attending museums, galleries, concerts and performances (Florida, The Rise of the Creative Class, 1-21).9

Whereas Florida homogenizes this group of professionals by discussing the role they played in sustaining creative cities where cultural industries flourished, I describe the convergences and divergences between and among art collectives and community organizations who each differently contributed to urbanization. I suggest that the artists produced site specific installations which re-presented, conformed to, and subverted the visions of those who formerly lived and worked in city spaces. In examining hotel exhibitions, I address the following questions in relation to the creative and artistic works displayed in the buildings: By producing installations for these sites, how did artists position themselves within historical debates on urban renewal? In what ways did they

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9 For further discussion of Florida’s theories on the creative class, please see Chapter 4.
alter and re-define cultural and residential districts where people lived and socialized by developing networks of rapport with varying constituencies who inhabited neighborhood sectors? This dissertation, then, not only explores the complexities of producing installations in the context of city revitalization, it also argues that the hotel – as a site of cultural production and consumption – impacted upon tenancy rights and community practices, thus re-politicizing the very meaning of gentrification and urban planning.

In analyzing hotel installations, I examine a range of visual and written documents including photographs, newspaper articles, correspondences, interviews, government reports and curatorial mandates. Located in public and private archives, these records form part of institutional and personal collections which serve particular objectives and agendas. While consulting with librarians, artists, hotel owners, curators and academics, I gained insight into the multiple and contending meanings of the installations in terms of thematic content, technical process and historical context. In addition I visited the hotel buildings where the pieces were located in order to acquire knowledge of the artists’ working processes. Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel still exist today and consequently I was able walk through the architectural spaces on numerous occasions to view the site specific art. By contrast Embassy Hotel burned down in a fire in May 2009 and, although I had the opportunity to visit the premises before it was destroyed, my access was limited ("Fire Destroys Century-Old Embassy Hotel").

Further the installation exhibitions remained in various states of completion and disrepair thus impacting how I interpreted the works. In those instances where the site specific projects were still intact, I was able to examine the extant pieces in their original settings, thus experiencing firsthand the ways in which the artists altered the interior and exterior décor. This however was not the case with the dismantled installations; for these
works, I consulted photographic reproductions, and written and verbal descriptions that provided me with an in-depth understanding of the concepts and themes behind the art. Through these different levels of analysis, I reconstruct the history of the site specific exhibitions by establishing links and connections between the different archival materials and sources.

In order to gain insight into the hotel installations, I conducted interviews with the building owners and artists involved with the projects focusing on the time period when creative communities actively organized events on the premises.\textsuperscript{10} Whereas the Embassy Hotel and Cameron House served as meeting places for artists during the 1980s and early 1990s, the Gladstone Hotel coordinated activities for creative communities from 2000 onward. Embassy Hotel continued to host installation exhibitions throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, however these were one off projects that were much smaller in scope than those produced during the earlier period when artists coordinated regular programs on the premises. Cameron House similarly continues to organize exhibitions to this day, but the works included in the shows do not have the same prevalence as the installations created from the 1980s to the early 1990s.\textsuperscript{11} Gladstone Hotel also currently offers a diverse range of art programs which creative communities from multiple disciplines participate in. The managers only recently started displaying works in the building and time will tell what direction these projects will follow in the upcoming years.

\textsuperscript{10} In preparing these interviews, I followed the procedures and protocols as outlined within my research application approved by the General Research Ethics Board at Queen’s University. This methodology involved providing the interviewees with information and consent forms which described the scope and parameter of my research and indicated the terms and conditions of their participation in the project.

\textsuperscript{11} While artists are less involved with the hotel, the theatre and music communities by contrast maintain working relationships with the owners and contribute to the business by coordinating ongoing performances in the bars on the main floor of the building.
While acknowledging the many individuals who participated in the cultural events hosted by the hotels, I only interviewed those people who fit within the parameters of my research study. More specifically I spoke with the building proprietors who established ongoing and continued relations with art collectives and cultural organizations from the surrounding neighborhood. The artists who I met carried through the objectives of the owners by producing site specific installations, thus rehabilitating the architecture in accordance with the business mandates established by the hotel management. They followed working processes which I identify as interventionist strategies by re-articulating ideological systems of power and knowledge. While subscribing to political aesthetics, they also worked through multiple and at times conflicting goals by creating and exhibiting installations in the hotels where they interacted with the people who lived, worked and socialized on the premises.

In interviewing the hotel owners and artists, I examine the ways in which the site specific works intersected community practices. Using feminist theories, I engage in processes of reciprocal exchange by working through shifting perspectives and points of views. Focusing on the co-construction of meaning resulting from the dialogues between myself and the interviewees, my methodology works across socio-economic and ethno-cultural differences. I reflect upon the power dynamics at play within the act of

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12 For a full list of the owners and artists who I interviewed, please see Appendix D.
13 I further eliminated some of the artists who I initially interviewed for my dissertation project. Although they all engaged in interventionist strategies, my final selection was based upon the relevancy of the works to the various themes that I addressed in my thesis. For a brief overview of these themes please see the chapter summaries at the end of the introduction.
interviewing by considering the changing subject positions enabled throughout the question and answer sessions. I explore how and why I situated myself in relationship to the interviewees by negotiating the context in which our interactions occurred.

Focusing on relational and interactive modes of knowledge-making, I link interpretive discourses to “situational ethics” by exploring the changing circumstances surrounding the research process. In meeting with the participants, I directed the conversations by identifying key topics for discussion, while accepting alternate lines of inquiry as proposed by the interviewees. I also conducted in-depth research on the artists and hotel owners in order to acquire the necessary background material before commencing the meetings. In listening to the responses and subsequently incorporating the transcripts into my writing, I reformulate what David Silverstein describes as “cultural and collective stories” (343-346) and present the interviews as inter-subjective narratives which open up the meaning and significance of installation exhibitions. The interviews thus form part of my archival research through which I explore the shifting interpretations surrounding the conception, production and exhibition of site specific art in hotel buildings.

My thesis develops this methodology by following an interdisciplinary approach which combines contemporary art criticism with theories on urban geography. I examine the spatialization of political aesthetics by situating hotel installations in the context of city development. I propose that artists participated in urbanization which gave rise to power struggles as differing constituencies staked claims to local neighborhoods. Creative

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15 Fontana and Frey describe situational ethics as the conditions under which academics conducted interviews. Researchers not only determined how and why they interacted with participants, but they also readjusted their expectations and guidelines in order to accommodate the interviewees. By following this methodology they responded to the needs of the participants, thus establishing trust and rapport during their discussions (Fontana and Frey 714-717).
communities established connections with cultural organizations who re-articulated tenancy rights in city regions by engaging in protest movements. Through these practices of radical dissent, they disrupted the social and political production of space. In analyzing the competing ideological discourses underlying urban activism, I link social coalitions with art collectives who perpetuated and undermined gentrification processes by resisting and contesting capitalist development.

In his discussion of grassroots movements, David Harvey argues that activists subverted municipal policies on city planning. Although neighborhood collectives challenged existing political institutions, they also engaged in oppositional practices by establishing their own mandates. They both de-inscribed and re-inscribed structures of power by determining the terms and conditions under which people participated in social formations (Harvey, "City and Justice: Social Movement in the City", 188-197). Harvey argues that protest groups sustained alliances in the surrounding region and developed connections with affiliate organizations in other provinces and countries. They thus mobilized political tactics on a local and global level. Through these contestations they resisted corporate developers who worked in collusion with government departments to gain ownership over city properties. In examining grassroots collectives, Harvey explores how they operated as micro and macro organizations which functioned according to their own hierarchies while destabilizing urban governance (Harvey, "City and Justice: Social Movement in the City", 197-207).

Nicholas Blomley similarly examines community activism in the downtown core by exploring strategies of resistance. He argues that the legal system guaranteed the rights of private developers over the needs of low income residents. Blomley suggests that
protestors opposed city renewal schemes which eradicated social housing. They supported the entitlements of working class constituencies who turned urban neighborhoods into sites of collective dissent. They engaged in local acts of struggle by disrupting gentrification which served global capitalist economies. Blomley describes oppositional movements in Vancouver, New York, Berlin and London, England where people resisted corporate institutions which took over city districts (39-55).

Blomley argues that activists occupied public urban space by disrupting geographies of power. They disenabled processes of mapping enacted by business organizations which staked out territories for economic development. Real estate investors controlled city planning by naming and claiming local neighborhoods (Blomley 55-70). They presented urbanization as the inevitable outcome of capitalist market forces, thus obfuscating the workings of power surrounding city revitalization. Protestors subverted the social and political production of space by mobilizing acts of transgression. According to Blomley they “destabilize[d] the enframings of dominant maps . . . and reframe[d] space in ways that sp[oke] to local histories of use and entitlement” (70). They undermined private property laws which excluded low income communities who inhabited urban districts.

Building on Harvey and Blomley’s writings on city activism, I consider the ways in which grassroots organizations re-politicized public urban sites. They engaged in interventionist strategies by undermining the ideological discourses surrounding city revitalization. They enacted counter-hegemonic tactics by reclaiming the downtown core.

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16 He describes in particular the renovation of single room occupancy hotels which provided affordable lodgings for people living in poverty (Blomley 1-7, 30-38, 46-55). His analysis is relevant to my own discussion of installations which artists produced and exhibited in hotels. These architectural sites historically functioned as boarding houses for low income tenants. By redesigning the building interiors and exteriors, artists contributed to the revitalization of the downtown core in ways that both enabled and disenabled economically disenfranchised communities.
for political contestation. I suggest that creative communities similarly participated in acts of radical dissent by negotiating urban regeneration which resulted in the displacement of socially marginalized tenants. They resisted capitalist development by occupying city spaces and re-envisioning urban geographies. Artists de-contextualized and re-contextualized the surrounding environment on a social and political level by aligning themselves with local activists who asserted and contested property rights and ownership.

In his discussion of creative communities, Adrian Blackwell describes the disruptive practices underlying political aesthetics. Focusing on the city of Toronto, he describes commercial development in the downtown core. He suggests that the rise in housing costs forced working class immigrant families to move to the surrounding regions. Artists proposed alternative approaches to urban planning while also critiquing the alienating effects of suburban sprawl which impacted communities displaced as a consequence of gentrification. As low income earners, artists also contended with processes of relocation as rental rates increased leaving them with limited options for studio space in inner city neighborhoods (Blackwell 29-33).

Blackwell suggests that business investors co-opted creative communities who brought cultural value to city districts by opening up production, exhibition and distribution centres. Corporate developers turned buildings into spectacles of display by establishing studio workshops as tourist attractions for consumer audiences. In coming up against market profiteers, artists engaged in oppositional movements by aligning themselves with social activists (Blackwell 33-37). Blackwell argues that creative

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17 David Ley similarly argues that the cultural value of urban districts transferred into economic value as middle class residents purchased properties in the areas where creative communities resided. In describing the geographic and political location of artists, he establishes them as socially and economically disenfranchised communities who lived on the periphery of cities. They experienced processes of marginalization as “the accrued capital of a location [was] traded in for the economic capital [and] the edge [became] the new centre” (Ley, "Artists, Aestheticization and the Field of Gentrification", 2541).
communities worked with local organizations which protested the marginalization of low income residents in the surrounding municipalities of Toronto. According to Blackwell they “created a linking device between high-profile gentrifying spaces and those marginalized spaces that populations have been relegated to” (36). Artists worked across city regions thus disrupting urban policies which polarized differing classed and racialized constituencies in residential and commercial districts.

Lucy Lippard similarly examines ways that artists have partnered with neighborhood collectives in creating site specific works. She explores concepts of community belonging by describing multi-centred societies where people interacted on a daily basis. Through these processes of exchange, tenants developed ties and connections to the cities and towns where they resided. By working with local groups, artists developed a sense of place which extended from the neighborhoods they inhabited to the surrounding regions. They moved into impoverished districts and lived alongside people of varying socio-economic and ethno-cultural backgrounds. They not only constructed community centers and parks, but they also renovated and redesigned the architectural interiors and exteriors of housing projects (Lippard, The Lure of the Local, 4-21, 202-214).

Lippard argues that capitalist investors re-appropriated the spaces where artists worked. They turned urban sectors into cultural corridors and opened up high end galleries and boutiques for the benefit of the middle class. Artists opposed city revitalization by producing architecture, theatre, sculptures, murals and installations

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18 In his own art projects Blackwell engaged in community activism by facilitating collective practices. For instance he and his partner, Kika Thorne joined other artists and architects who organized public protests at Toronto City Hall in 1996 and 1998. These political rallies addressed issues such as city amalgamation, homelessness, poverty and urban governance. In collaboration with local groups, Blackwell and Thorne created sculpture, architecture and landscape design which examined social concerns (Thorne n. pag.).
which addressed issues such as poverty and homelessness. They circulated and distributed their art in the buildings and streets where people engaged in social and cultural practices. Artists re-politicized public urban space by facilitating processes of radical dissent through which residents opposed gentrification schemes (Lippard, *The Lure of the Local*, 216-224).

Following Blackwell and Lippard’s analyses, I argue that artists participated in oppositional movements. I analyze the ways in which they disrupted capitalist development in city regions. Artists engaged in local acts of struggle by reclaiming urban neighborhoods as sites of political contestation. Yet they also contributed to urban renewal in ways that negatively impacted economically disenfranchised constituencies. By opening up studio workshops in city localities, artists occupied building properties where people living in poverty previously rented lodgings. They re-articulated socio-spatial practices through which tenants and workers de-legitimated and re-legitimated urban districts by negotiating the governmental and administrative infrastructure underlying gentrification. Whereas Blackwell and Lippard suggest that creative communities operated outside of consumer markets, I propose that they developed socially conscious approaches to art-making by facilitating cultural production in capitalist economies.

I discuss in particular installations in hotels which served tourist industries by combining room accommodations with gallery spaces and performance venues. The Embassy Hotel, Cameron House, and Gladstone Hotel, which functioned as commercial establishments in city centres, exhibited and distributed works on the premises; artists responded to the differing needs of the owners, staff and patrons who inhabited the buildings. They refurbished the hotel décor in accordance with the mandates established
by the proprietors - architectural renovations which in turn formed part of urban
development and resulted in the rehabilitation of the downtown core. By rejuvenating the
surrounding areas artists contended with processes of marginalization and
disenfranchisement as precipitated by gentrification which proved detrimental for low
income residents. They redefined urban renewal, by negotiating the complex workings of
power through which people asserted and contested tenancy rights. Artists responded to
the multiple and conflicting interests of business and community organizations which
regulated and monitored local districts.

**Geographies of City Revitalization**

In order to contextualize hotel installations in city neighborhoods, I now discuss
theories on gentrification and processes of urbanization in Canada, Europe and North
America. This line of inquiry frames my study of the city sectors where artists engaged in
cultural production. I link site specific practices in hotel buildings with revitalization
projects as mandated by municipal and provincial governments in different geographic
regions. This comparative analysis offers insights into the changing circumstances and
conditions shaping urban renewal. I examine the competing trajectories underlying
development schemes in order to reveal the paradox of gentrification which both de-
institutionalized and re-institutionalized city districts.

Henri Lefebvre describes the ideological discourses surrounding the social
production of space in market economies. He identifies three different aspects of urban
geography: spatial practice, representations of space and spatial representations. This triad
correlates with perceived, conceived and lived space which operated on an institutional,
theoretical and symbolic level (11-14, 30-46). In examining city development, Lefebvre
analyzes capitalist expansion in urban localities. He argues that business conglomerates
controlled economic production by establishing alliances with government departments which reinforced hegemonic discourses of power and knowledge. Lefebvre proposes that corporate and state institutions “intervened in social space and its production” through architectural projects and urban planning schemes which perpetuated ideological systems (44).

It is precisely this hierarchical structuring of city spaces which Neil Smith examines in his analysis of gentrification in North America. He describes economic development in urban regions which served the interests of property managers who assumed ownership over impoverished neighborhoods. These city districts deteriorated because absentee landlords allowed buildings to fall into a state of disrepair, thus leading to the demise of the surrounding areas. Smith suggests that government organizations facilitated processes of city degeneration by limiting how and why people accessed housing. The resulting depreciation in property values precipitated city revitalization because it allowed professional developers to buy buildings at cheap prices, thus perpetuating what Smith refers to as the rent gap (Smith, The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City, 58-70).

Landlords turned a profit by driving up rental rates to the detriment of people living in poverty who could no longer afford the increased housing costs. According to Smith these processes of urban renewal occurred at both a local and global level as cities competed with each other in capitalist markets. He suggests that international corporations de-invested and re-invested in real estate properties thus impacting the price of housing stock. The resulting revitalization of downtown neighborhoods forced out low income tenants thus contributing toward the uneven distribution of wealth and power. Smith proposes that “gentrification [was] . . . part of the social agenda of a larger
restructuring of the economy” which sustained class inequities within and across city regions (Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*, 89).

Doreen Massey similarly examines capitalist development in urban centres with particular focus on financial districts in London, England. She argues that business conglomerates funded building projects which included office towers, boutiques, restaurants and condominiums. These architectural renovations inflated housing costs with negative consequences for economically disenfranchised residents (Massey, *For Space*, 152-159, 167-169). Whereas Smith describes the polarization of high and low income earners, Massey discusses the contestations between and among impoverished communities who comprised people of varying racialized and classed identities. She indicates that they negotiated different levels of oppression as they asserted and contested tenancy rights in the downtown core. In discussing the geo-politics of urbanization, Massey argues that “space, as relational and as the sphere of multiplicity, is . . . perpetually reconfigured through, political engagement” (183). She describes the internalization and externalization of power structures as multiple and conflicting constituencies staked claims to city neighborhoods.

I borrow from Smith and Massey’s writings on gentrification by examining the conflicting ideological discourses surrounding urbanization. I propose that city renewal served the interests and agendas of opposing government and business organizations which redefined the social and political production of space. These theoretical arguments carry through my discussions of political aesthetics by describing practices of discord and dissent through which local residents and workers re-articulated community and institutional affiliations. I reveal the contradictory workings of power that artists contended with by participating in city revitalization which de-inscribed and re-inscribed
urban geographies. In examining the geo-politics of city planning, I suggest creative communities aligned themselves with neighborhood collectives who consolidated and disrupted hegemonic systems.

David Ley and Jon Caulfield develop this line of analysis by exploring the diversification of urban renewal in Canadian cities. They describe mixed neighborhoods which combined affordable housing with condominiums. They argue that middle class residents reacted against modernist urban planning which resulted in the destruction of existing neighborhoods. Ley and Caulfield associate high income professionals with social movements which resisted corporate development by creating livable cities. They engaged in urbane lifestyles which distinguished them socially and culturally from tenants who resided in the suburbs (Ley, *The New Middle Class*, 81-105, 175-221; Caulfield, *City Form and Everyday Life*, 61-96, 124-145).¹⁹

According to Ley and Caulfield artists acted as marginal gentrifiers by rejuvenating city sectors. They suggest that creative communities contended with processes of displacement but provide different reasons for these evictions. Whereas Ley proposes that middle class constituents pushed out artists, Caulfield argues that corporate forces drove away artists by commercializing and commoditizing urban neighborhoods. Further both authors indicate that low income residents moved out of revitalized districts due to the increase in property values which made it difficult for people living in poverty to maintain lodgings in city centres (Ley, *The New Middle Class*, 5-22, 175-221; Caulfield, *City Form and Everyday Life*, 124-145).

¹⁹ Ley and Caulfield analyze the culture of city revitalization thus developing an alternate theoretical methodology from Neil Smith who examines the economy of gentrification. I combine these two approaches by analyzing the intersection of economic and cultural production in urban regions.
Damaris Rose critiques theories on urban geography which present marginalized gentrifiers as displaced communities. Focusing on Montreal, she suggests that differing social and cultural classes participated in city renewal. Thus university educated professionals lived alongside cultural producers and service providers (Rose, “Economic Restructuring and the Diversification of Gentrification”, 150-158). In examining the “social mix” of residents and workers, Rose describes the power differentials between and among the tenants who inhabited urban sectors. She questions “who participate[d] and who represent[ed] who in locally anchored political and administrative structures” (Rose, “Economic Restructuring and the Diversification of Gentrification”, 158). She proposes that gentrification served the interests and agendas of diverse socio-economic and ethno-cultural classes.

In analyzing writings on urban regeneration in Canadian cities, I explore the geopolitics of revitalization schemes. I link Rose’s analysis with Ley and Caulfield’s texts by exploring the ways in which high and low income residents contended with gentrification. They took up specific classed locations which impacted how they accessed housing and who controlled the decision-making process surrounding urbanization. This theoretical approach provides a contextual framework for examining commercial and residential districts in Ontario where creative communities produced hotel installations. My analysis of contemporary art practices differ from Ley and Caulfield’s writings on social movements which they associate with middle class communities who opposed capitalist development. They propose that collectives renovated and converted historic buildings in order to retain the existing character of the neighborhood.

By contrast artists facilitated creative interventions which altered the function and design of the existing architecture. Although they rehabilitated the downtown core, their
goals and objectives differed from the professional managerial class. Artists re-politicized public urban space by enacting tactics of radical dissent which borrowed from critical art discourse. They took up a paradoxical position as marginalized communities by redefining city revitalization. They both re-enacted and subverted urban renewal by creating site specific art in hotels. Historically these buildings served as boarding houses for economically disenfranchised tenants. In some instances the owners evicted the residents in order to open up the space for cultural production. In other cases, the proprietors maintained the existing clientele while also inviting artists to exhibit installations on the premises.

Working within this urban context artists both enabled and disenabled community formations. They opened up art-making practices to the diverse constituencies who inhabited the hotels thus facilitating participatory processes of exchange. Yet they engaged in critical interventions in buildings which served as sites of contestations as residents and workers opposed processes of displacement. These confrontations provided evidence of the political stakes at play in gentrification which benefited middle class homeowners, meanwhile marginalizing people living in poverty. By participating in hotel exhibitions, artists re-articulated the classed and racialized disparities perpetuated through urbanization processes. Their installations took on particular meanings in the surrounding city districts where people made claims to property rights and ownership.

The hotels that I examine in my project were situated in urban localities which experienced different stages of degeneration and regeneration as business owners bought and sold buildings in the area. These acts of entitlement and disentitlement repeated themselves in the hotels which underwent changes in ownership thus impacting who inhabited the premises. By occupying the buildings and upgrading the architecture, artists
reformulated the structures of inclusion and exclusion surrounding city revitalization. To further clarify how they confronted the social and economic inequities underlying gentrification, I place the hotels in the context of urban development in the cities of London, Ontario and Toronto.

I consider the ways in which the owners responded to processes of de-industrialization and urban renewal. For example Embassy Hotel was located on Dundas Street East in London, Ontario, and Cameron House is located on Queen Street West in Toronto, Ontario.20 Both of these neighborhoods experienced economic hardships during the 1970s with the closure of factories and warehouses which altered the urban landscape as workers and residents vacated their premises leaving behind abandoned buildings. Due to low property values people moved back to these areas at the beginning of the 1980s where they opened up bars, restaurants, retail stores, groceries, galleries and cultural centres (Hassan, Personal Interview, 26-29; Tookey 17-18).

Although urban growth occurred during the 1980s, the two regions – Toronto and London – underwent different struggles. Whereas Queen Street West prospered in the ensuing years, in London, the area of Dundas Street East entered into disuse and decay. This sector of the city was situated outside the central business district which was located

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20 It is important to note that the size of these urban spaces differs. From the 1980s to the early 1990s, when artists produced site specific installations at Embassy Hotel and Cameron House, the population of London, Ontario increased from approximately 250,000 to 300,000, and the population of Toronto, Ontario increased from approximately 600,000 to 630,000. During the 1990s Toronto and London expanded in size as the municipalities and rural townships along the outer districts of the cities amalgamated into the downtown core (Canada, Census, 1986; Canada, Census, 1996; Statistics Canada, Profile of Census Divisions and Subdivisions; Statistics Canada, Profiles: Population and Dwelling Characteristics; “Event Highlights for the City of London 1990 – 2000”, n. pag.). Due to city amalgamation, by the early 2000s when artists exhibited works at Gladstone Hotel, the population in Toronto increased to approximately 2,500,000 (Statistics Canada, 2007). The differences in population and geographic size of the regions impacted gentrification schemes. In examining site specific exhibitions, I consider continuities and variances in practices of art-making within the context of city revitalization. This is to say that while the size of Toronto and London differ and shift, I bring into focus the complexities of cultural and economic production.
a few blocks West on Dundas Street (Figure 1). The east end of London was historically a working class neighborhood which included predominantly low income residents of mixed ethnic backgrounds (Code n. pag.).\textsuperscript{21} During this time period government departments and corporate organizations focused on building shopping centres and commercial establishments in the downtown core and the surrounding suburbs. These processes of urban renewal forced out local entrepreneurs who relocated to other neighborhoods where the rent was cheaper (Stanton 4-18).


\textsuperscript{21} The local tenants also comprised carnival workers who found temporary employment at the Western Fairgrounds and Raceway which was situated a few blocks east of Embassy Hotel (Hassan, Personal Interview, 6). In addition the location of the London Psychiatric Hospital in East London contributed to the growing population of people with mental illness in the area.
However there were not enough large scale businesses in London to fill the vacated buildings in the downtown area. Thus the surrounding streetscape deteriorated, and many upscale retailers moved into the affluent sectors north along Richmond Street where predominantly white middle class residents lived. The uneven distribution of wealth and power across geographic regions thus provided evidence of what Neil Smith refers to as “the class remake of the central landscape” (Smith, *The New Urban Frontier*, 39). More specifically city revitalization in London resulted in the development of commercial and residential districts for the benefit of high income earners. Meanwhile the area of Dundas Street East entered into economic decline during the recessions in the 1980s and 1990s. Small scale businesses moved in and out of this sector of the city and attempted to establish themselves in the local community with varying degrees of success. Due to the deflated housing costs, the neighborhood remained an inexpensive place to live and provided affordable housing for low income residents (Code n. pag.). Some of the tenants renovated the buildings, while others lacked the funding and resources to upgrade their accommodations; the surrounding architecture thus remained in differing stages of disrepair and reconstruction.

Cameron House by contrast is located on Queen Street West in Toronto which corporate developers gentrified from the mid 1980s onward. This retail strip radiates out from the central business district which is situated a few blocks south east at the corner of King and Bay Streets (Figure 2). At the beginning of the 1980s Queen Street West was a relatively inexpensive place to live and included specialty stores, restaurants, clubs and bars which catered to varying constituencies (Donegan, “What Ever Happened to Queen Street West?”, 13-14, 20-22). In addition, tenants of mixed socio-economic and ethnocultural backgrounds inhabited the residential districts running along the commercial
corridor. However at the end of the 1980s and into the 1990s private investors purchased the surrounding properties and opened up big box conglomerations and chain stores for the benefit of the professional managerial class. Due to inflated housing costs in other districts of Toronto, many white middle income tenants moved into the neighborhoods surrounding Queen Street West, thus pushing out people living in poverty. These shifts in the geo-political landscape impacted working class immigrant residents who moved further away from the downtown core into the surrounding suburbs of Scarborough, western North York and northern Etobicoke (Meligrana and Skaburskis 1574-1578, 1581-1587).

Figure 2. Map showing Cameron House (starred), Toronto, Ontario. Mapquest. 28 Jan. 2008 <http://www.mapquest.com/>.
Gentrification continued to spread West along Queen Street into the neighborhood referred to as Parkdale where Gladstone Hotel is located (Figure 3). Situated in the Arts and Design district this sector of the city forms part of the expanding downtown core. Historically this was an affluent suburb of Toronto which entered into economic decline in the 1960s and 1970s after corporate developers destroyed the housing in the area in order to make way for an expressway and high density apartment buildings. By the 1980s Parkdale included predominantly low income residents from immigrant communities. In addition a significant number of people living with mental illness took up tenancy in rooming houses and bachelor apartments after the local psychiatric hospital, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health scaled back on its services in the 1980s (Slater, “Municipally Managed Gentrification in South Parkdale”, 307-310).22

In the late 1990s and early 2000s commercial and residential developers gentrified the area in order to serve the needs of the middle class. Municipal and provincial policies further facilitated urban renewal schemes by allowing for the conversion of rooming houses into single family dwellings. These rebuilding projects proved detrimental for people living in poverty who formerly resided in the neighborhood. Unable to afford the rental increases they relocated to new premises and looked for alternate lodgings in other sectors of the city (Slater, “Municipally Managed Gentrification in South Parkdale”, 307-314-321). The rising property values also drove out small scale businesses which could not compete with the more expensive and upscale retail outlets which moved into Parkdale. These processes of displacement impacted local workers and residents who

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22 Cutbacks in government programs during the 1980s resulted in a reduction of patient admittance at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Hence the administration let go of many of their existing patients who moved into housing accommodations in the neighborhood of Parkdale (Slater, “Municipally Managed Gentrification in South Parkdale”, 307-310).
included people of varying socio-economic and ethno-cultural backgrounds. They contended daily with the negative impacts of gentrification and confronted the growing race and class disparities within and across neighborhood districts where tenants staked claims to property rights and ownership.

Due to ongoing capitalist de-investments and re-investments in the real estate markets in the regions of London and Toronto from the 1970s to the 1990s, the hotel buildings became available for sale. The owners of Embassy Hotel, Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel followed different approaches to operating and managing their premises in this shifting economic environment. They took over the properties during different
time periods and worked in sectors of the cities which experienced different stages of urban renewal. Independent proprietors, Helen and Egon Haller bought the Embassy Hotel in the late 1970s. The Sanella family and local entrepreneur Herb Tookey purchased the Cameron House in the early 1980s. More recently the Zeidler family bought the Gladstone Hotel in partnership with Micheal Tippen and eventually gained sole ownership of the property in 2002.

Prior to city revitalization people lived in the hotel buildings which suffered from years of neglect and required renovations in order to bring them up to health and safety standards. The tenants still resided on the premises when the new owners took over the properties. The clientele included male pensioners and welfare recipients as well as transient workers and some female inhabitants. Whereas Embassy Hotel continued to rent rooms to the former residents, Gladstone Hotel and Cameron House relocated the long term tenants to new premises. In all three cases the management also operated the bars and cafés in the hotels which the working class customers visited both before and after the new owners took over the buildings. In analyzing the hotel exhibitions, I situate the art projects within the context of the daily interactions between the staff and clients.

By engaging in cultural production artists facilitated critical aesthetics which both enabled and disenabled community formations. On the one hand, they established connections with people of differing socio-economic and ethno-cultural backgrounds. On the other hand, they politicized site specific practices by developing alternative ways of living and thinking which alienated the low income residents who took up lodgings in the hotels. The eviction of the tenants from the premises further complicated these processes of inclusion and exclusion. Artists implicated themselves in the political contestations over public city space by engaging in acts of radical dissent. They disrupted government
and corporate organizations which institutionalized city sectors. Although artists protested gentrification schemes, they also marginalized economically disenfranchised communities. They participated in counter-hegemonic tactics which subverted city development by re-envisioning public urban spaces in ways that both consolidated and transgressed structures of power.

I expand upon these theoretical arguments in Chapter 2 by examining writings on dialogical aesthetics by Suzi Gablik and Grant Kester who analyze the processes of exchange surrounding community based practices. I suggest that artists established networks of rapport with colleagues and friends from various fields of professions including painters, sculptors, videographers, musicians, writers and theatre directors. They also came into contact with the tenants who lived, worked and socialized in the hotel spaces where artists produced and distributed their pieces. They altered the surrounding environment on a social, historical and symbolic level, thus changing the meaning and significance of the building sites for the varying constituencies who resided on the premises.

Creative communities produced multi-disciplinary works which crossed the boundaries between architecture, craft, design, sculpture, photography and drawing. They developed upon the aesthetic traditions established by their peers and mentors who redefined contemporary art discourse. Artists also turned the hotel sites into spectacles of display thus meeting the needs of the business owners who refurbished the décor in order to appeal to consumer audiences. The proprietors expanded their services by supporting artists who organized exhibitions and performances in the hotels. Creative communities thus negotiated the push and pull between art and commerce by renovating the buildings and engaging in cultural production.
In chapter 3, I extend my contextual analysis by situating hotel installations in historic districts that government departments designated as heritage sectors. Artists disrupted conservation policies which focused on Euro-American architectural styles in city neighborhoods. Policy analysts prescribed and proscribed the terms and conditions surrounding building renovations in the downtown core. By creating hotel installations, artists disrupted the political ideologies underlying heritage preservation schemes by exploring histories of differing racialized, sexualized, gendered and classed communities. They exhibited site specific works in buildings which served as meeting places where varying constituencies interacted. I suggest that artists redefined historic sectors as determined by policy analysts who described the cultural value of city districts.

More specifically I examine Spring Hurlbut’s Tree Column (1987) at Embassy Hotel and Sybil Goldstein’s wall mural Bacchanal (1983) at Cameron House. Hurlbut and Goldstein altered the building design, thus changing how and why the hotels functioned in the local neighborhood. They re-invented artistic traditions by undermining the architectural canons perpetuated by conservationists who reinforced elitist concepts of taste. Hurlbut and Goldstein re-imaged the hotel décor, thus disrupting cultural policies which established building standards according to existing conventions. Whereas policy analysts framed urban districts within heritage conservation schemes, Hurlbut and Goldstein reframed the surrounding building by exhibiting installations in spaces that transgressed the hotel interiors and exteriors. They re-mapped processes of territorialization as enacted by municipal departments which demarcated city regions as tourist destinations.

Chapter 3 also examines policy reform as mandated by government departments which funded the development of cultural corridors in the city of Toronto. I focus on
University Avenue which lies at the centre of the downtown core and serves as a main thoroughfare through the surrounding districts. Policy analysts established the boulevard as an Avenue of the Arts and described the museums, galleries, performance centres and concert halls located in and around the area. I suggest that artists took up a paradoxical position in the context of urban renewal which resulted in the designation of cultural districts. They not only participated in the aestheticization of urban neighborhoods by exhibiting installations in hotel buildings, but they also developed socially conscious approaches to cultural production and consumption.

In discussing creative practices, I focus on Napoleon Brousseau’s sculpture, Ten Ants (1984) at Cameron House and Millie Chen’s installation Chinoiserie (2006) at Gladstone Hotel. Whereas Brousseau engaged in environmental activism through his work, Chen undermined orientalist discourses which perpetuated racist stereotypes. Both artists intercepted geographies of power by de-contextualizing and re-contextualizing the hotel sites. They subverted cultural policies which determined the boundaries and limits of art sectors in the city of Toronto. Although they opened up the hotels to urban interventions, they also occupied an architectural space where low income tenants protested processes of eviction and relocation as the new owners took over the premises. Brousseau and Chen politicized the downtown core, while also participating in revitalization schemes which de-politicized the economically disenfranchised communities who resided at the hotels. Their works thus provided evidence of the contradictions underlying gentrification which gave rise to power struggles as residents and workers asserted and contested housing rights.

In Chapter 3 I return to theories on urban geography in order to expand my discussion of critical aesthetics. I connect Doreen Massey’s theories on relational politics
of space with Rosalind Deutsche’s analysis of politicized public art. Massey and Deutsche focus on practices of urban dissent through which varying constituencies lay claims to city neighborhoods. I propose that artists engaged in disruptive politics by giving voice to oppressed racialized and sexualized subjectivities. I examine postcolonialist and feminist theories in order to reveal the ways in which artists overturned repressive systems of representation which established subaltern bodies as marginalized others.

This critical framework informs my discussion of Shelagh Keeley’s untitled installation at Embassy Hotel and Allyson Mitchell’s room design, Faux Naturelle (2005) at Gladstone Hotel. Keeley and Mitchell explored the spatialization of emotive and sensorial processes within and across real and imagined architectural sites by reenacting bodily displacements. They referenced acts of dislocation which intersected and disrupted historical material geographies of colonization and gender oppression. While Keeley and Mitchell created a critical space through which the subaltern gained visibility, their studio practices took on another level of meaning within the context of the hotel sites where they displayed their works. Keeley’s installation underwent artistic re-interpretation by the low income tenants of Embassy Hotel who claimed the space by refurbishing the architectural interior. By contrast Mitchell’s piece formed part of the hotel renovations at Gladstone Hotel where the displacement of the pre-existing patrons excluded the participation of the former tenants in acts of cultural production as facilitated by creative communities.

In examining site specific exhibitions in hotel buildings, I suggest that artists perpetuated and destabilized processes of urbanization by contending with the tensions and contradictions underlying city revitalization. They addressed the multiple and conflicting agendas of the residents and workers who inhabited the downtown core by
reformulating institutional and community affiliations. They de-inscribed and re-inscribed geographies of power by consolidating and undermining existing systems of urban governance. In displaying and distributing installations in hotel buildings, they created what Michel Foucault refers to as “heterotopias” by representing, contesting and inverting existing architectural sites (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 24). They participated in installation exhibitions which disrupted city development schemes, thus interceding in the social, economic and political production of space.
Chapter 2: Historical Contexts of Hotel Installations

This chapter describes the historical contexts of the installation exhibitions at Embassy Hotel, Cameron Hotel and Gladstone Hotel. I explore the ways in which the site specific works gained meaning for the various constituencies who inhabited the premises by examining the differing goals and objectives of the hotel owners and patrons. Such a methodology sets the stage for subsequent chapters of my thesis which evaluate specific examples of hotel installations. Here I address the social, economic and political conditions surrounding cultural production in order to expand my discussion of site specific art. This historical framework offers insights into the structures of power and knowledge shaping installation exhibitions thus serving as a prelude to the more detailed analyses of individual works.

In order to reconstruct the history of the hotel installations, I shall reveal the ways in which tenants and workers inhabited local neighborhoods by evaluating theories on dialogic aesthetics as developed within contemporary art discourse. By participating in creative projects at the hotels, the artists developed networks of support with their peers and mentors. These processes of exchange further intersected familial and community relations as artists negotiated the overlapping and at times conflicting needs of the residents and customers of the hotels. They explored multiple and contending agendas through which people gave voice to changing socio-economic and ethno-cultural identities. Artists reformulated personal and political affiliations by participating in collective practices within particular social and historical contexts.

In her book *The Reenchantment of Art* (1991) Suzi Gablik develops theories on community based approaches by critiquing modernist, abstract art which reinforced mythic concepts of creative ingenuity. Such romantic ideals described artists creating in
solitary isolation in their studios. Gablik argues that creative communities exhibited their works in galleries which promoted elitist notions of taste by categorizing and classifying art according to hierarchical systems of interpretation. Within the context of the museum, the artist assumed a position of authority and enlightened the viewers by developing stylistic innovations in painting and sculpture.

Gablik suggests that these notions of aesthetic enlightenment borrowed from Cartesian modes of thinking by reinforcing dualistic concepts of mind/body, self/other (Gablik 146-150, 162-166). Within modernist discourse, artists obtained a heightened level of awareness by disrupting social convention and rejecting mainstream culture. The artistic self both predominated and produced works for the spiritual betterment of the viewing other. In contrast to concepts of the solitary artistic genius, Gablik develops theories on “dialogic aesthetics” by analyzing interactive art (Gablik, 162-166). She argues that artists worked outside gallery institutions by engaging in cultural production in spaces where people lived, worked and socialized on a daily basis. Further in creating art for alternative exhibition sites, they facilitated discussions and conversations between and among participating audiences.

Gablik suggests that we need to explore a “historical transformation of Cartesian aesthetic traditions, based on autonomy and mastery, into artistic practices based instead on the interrelational, ecological and process character of the world, and a new sort of permeability with the audience” (163). She focuses on artists who built networks of rapport with viewers, thus opening up systems of communication to multiple and shifting perspectives and points of view. According to Gablik, artists altered cultural attitudes and assumptions by making audiences aware of their relationship with other people in particular historical material contexts (148, 151, 157-158, 165).
Although Gablik describes processes of social exchange, she ignores the institutional context within which these interactions occurred. That is to say that she does not consider the ways in which artists and audiences accessed structures of knowledge and power within exhibition projects. It is precisely these discursive formations which Grant Kester examines in his discussion of dialogic aesthetics. Kester analyzes collaborative practices by exploring Jürgen Habermas’ writings on discourse ethics which describes mutual processes of communication. Habermas suggests that individuals expressed their opinions in anticipation of a response from their intended listeners. In this way, they became aware of themselves through other’s perceptions and points of views. Although Habermas examines reciprocal acts of meaning-making, he ignores the interests and agendas of the varying constituencies involved in these exchanges (Kester 108-114).

Kester by contrast references concepts of “connected knowing” as developed by feminist writers. Focusing on collaborative approaches to art-making, he evaluates the changing positions of artists and audiences both within and outside of the collectives. He argues that participants reconstituted discursive formations by giving voice to shifting subjectivities (113-114). Kester warns against idealistic notions of “dialogical determinism” which promoted open ended discussion and debate (181-187). He suggests that these theories overlooked “the manifest differentials in power relations that precondition[ed] participation in discourse” and ignored “the extent to which political change t[ook] place through discursive forms . . . that [were] far from open and ideal”(182). Kester examines the political identities of communities yet argues that people continually negotiated networks of power in naming and defining the goals and aims of collectives. Artists participated in community based practices by working through
competing ideological discourses and intervening in institutional and bureaucratic systems of governance (158-181).

In examining the changing theorizations on dialogic aesthetics, I draw attention to the processes of exchange surrounding the conceptualization and implementation of hotel installations. More specifically I explore the ways in which artists situated themselves in relation to the hotel residents, staff and customers. I suggest that artists formed part of neighborhood communities and responded to the needs of the hotel owners who developed networks of rapport with local tenants and workers. In producing installations in hotels, the artists rearticulated structures of power and knowledge by working through the shifting objectives of the business entrepreneurs and neighborhood residents who inhabited the premises. They negotiated competing ideological discourses by contending with the multiple and at times conflicting agendas of the differing communities who gained a sense of identity and belonging within the surrounding neighborhood.

In taking over the hotel establishments, the new owners made concessions to the existing residents and workers, meanwhile expanding the facilities and services in order to attract new customers. The buildings thus changed in function as the artists produced site specific works on the premises. For instance the installation exhibitions at Embassy Hotel provided an early example of artists working in public urban spaces. Located at 732 Dundas Street East in London, Ontario, the hotel included a bar\(^1\) and restaurant on the first floor and room rentals on the second floor (Malone 39-41) (Figures 4 and 5) (See Appendix A for Embassy Cultural House Floor Plans). In about 1977 local entrepreneurs

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\(^1\)The hotel owners and customers referred to the bar as the Beaver Room (Haller 10, 11, 15).
Helen Haller and her husband Egon Haller\textsuperscript{2} purchased the premises from independent landlords who bought the building from Helen Haller’s father, Alex Hassan in roughly 1957. Alex Hassan was a working class immigrant who moved to Canada from Lebanon with his wife and established himself within the community by opening up the hotel in East London.\textsuperscript{3} When he managed and operated the premises, he developed and maintained relations with local residents who continued to support the business for many years (Haller 1, 9-10). Building upon these family connections, Helen and Egon Haller retained the long term returning customers. They also continued to rent the rooms to the existing low income tenants, thus providing affordable housing when there were few options available for people living in poverty (Haller 1-2, 7-9, 15-17).\textsuperscript{4}

In addition to renting the rooms, the patrons and clients visited the bar and restaurant. The hotel served as a community meeting place where people engaged in daily activities such as neighborhood socializing, collective organizing and cultural programming. In running the commercial establishment, Helen Haller retained the long term customers whom her father developed connections with. She recounted her memories of the former inhabitants and described the conversations between the tenants who “were part of the hotel’s history” (10). She indicated that “sometimes the stories weren’t exactly the same because each person heard them differently” (10). The history of the hotel thus intersected and overlapped multiple and changing narratives which spanned

\textsuperscript{2} Helen and Egon Haller continued to operate and manage the hotel together until 1998 at which point they separated. Helen Haller then lived in British Columbia for a brief period while retaining ownership over the business. She subsequently returned to London and continued to manage and operate the hotel until 2001 when she sold it to an independent landlord (Haller 1, 5). Although originally both Helen and Egon Haller owned the premises, Helen Haller had a more extensive and personal connection to the building. As such I relied predominantly on her insights in my research and analysis of the hotel.
\textsuperscript{3} Hassan owned the hotel from 1936 to about 1957 and subsequently sold it to independent landlords who retained the property until the Hallers purchased it in approximately 1977 (Haller 10; Malone 40).
\textsuperscript{4} Unlike more traditional hotels, Embassy Hotel functioned as a boarding house by providing single room occupancies at low cost for both short and long term residents.
across generations. In discussing the shifting interpretations, Haller drew attention to collective and shared remembrances and described reciprocating acts of meaning making through mutual practices of listening and speaking. She established the Embassy Hotel as a family owned and operated business which sustained connections with the surrounding neighborhood.

Helen and Egon Haller also expanded the facilities in order to attract new clientele. They renovated the rooms on the second floor and constructed a lounge on the first floor known as the Sunnyside Lounge⁵ (Figure 6). Helen Haller supported and promoted the local art community by commissioning her sister and artist Jamelie Hassan to paint portraits of the hotel workers and residents in 1978 (Haller 1). Hassan

⁵ When Helen Haller’s father owned the building, he named it Sunnyside Hotel and Helen Haller named the Sunnyside Lounge in memory of him (Haller 2).
subsequently founded the art collective, Embassy Cultural House in 1983 with her partner and artist Ron Benner and musician Eric Stach. During its existence the collective worked in conjunction with local artists, musicians, curators and academics and organized concerts, exhibitions, film screenings, lectures, poetry readings and multimedia performances at the hotel (Benner, Interview with Crandall, et al. 7-9, 17-18; Hassan, Interview with Crandall, et al. 3-4, 6-10; Stach, Interview with Crandall, et al. 2-8). 6


6 Embassy Cultural House was in operation from 1983 to 1990. Helen Haller continued to organize art, music and film programs at the hotel after the collective disbanded (Haller 2-3, 12-13). My thesis however focuses on Embassy Cultural House which worked from the hotel for an extended period and developed an ongoing relationship with the owners.
Haller kept the channels of communication open between the artists, workers and residents by negotiating the varying goals and objectives of the hotel tenants and the collective. She indicated that “a few artists would step in and break down the boundaries . . . but the artists wouldn’t be able to converse with [the customers]. . . . [because] [t]hey just didn’t come from the same background as me” (Haller 2). In establishing rapport with these differing constituencies Haller contended with the tensions and contradictions underlying community formations. Facilitating what Suzi Gablik and Grant Kester refer to as practices of “dialogic exchange”, she responded to the overlapping and multiple agendas through which the artists, residents and staff asserted and contested politics of identity and belonging.

While ensuring the comfort and well being of the hotel customers, Haller interacted daily with the people who lived in the surrounding neighborhood. She dealt with the sometimes difficult realities of working in a city district that experienced economic hardships due to processes of de-industrialization. As a result of the closure of factories and warehouses in the area, tenants lacked the resources and funds required to sustain and develop the local economy. The vacant and abandoned buildings contributed to the deteriorating streetscape where illegal and underground activities prevailed including drug trafficking and sex trade work.

With the relocation of the police station to the downtown core, the municipal authorities monitored and regulated the neighborhood. They infringed upon people’s rights with sometimes negative consequences for the local residents who included predominantly working class immigrant families. The police targeted in particular racialized communities, thus perpetuating the chain of harassment and violence in the
A few of the patrons who drank at the hotel bar further compounded these social prejudices by making racist comments. Their intolerant attitudes impacted the other customers and tenants some of whom were First Nations people. Enforcing a zero tolerance policy against violence, Haller censured the offenders from returning to the premises (Benner, Interview with Crandall, et. al. 10-11; Haller 6; Hassan, Lecture for Open Forum, Planning: Power, Politics, and People, n. pag.; Hassan, Personal Interview, 5-6).

These confrontations complicated the process of exchange surrounding the conception and implementation of the music and art programs. In organizing exhibitions and performances at the hotel, the artists and musicians socialized with their colleagues and mentors. In addition they came into contact with the people who lived and worked on the premises. They took up particular positions within the social and historical context of the hotel where they interacted with the tenants and staff. They thus contended with competing ideological discourses from curatorial proposals and business mandates to community practices through which people made claims to differing socio-economic and ethno-cultural identities.

The exhibitions coordinated by Embassy Cultural House included both temporary and permanent installations which the artists displayed in the bar, restaurant, lounge, hallways, rooms and bathroom of the hotel (See Appendix A1 for list of permanent installations at Embassy Hotel). In discussing the mandate of the collective, Jamelie Hassan indicated that “artists’ projects . . . were initiated with respect paid to the working/living climate of the hotel as opposed to the more familiar and sometimes exclusive spaces solely for art” (Hassan, Lecture for Open Forum, Planning: Power,
Politics, and People, n. pag.).\(^7\) Alongside this mandate, the Embassy Cultural House changed the context within which audiences viewed installations as well as the function and purpose of the works. Located within a “working/living” environment, the artists produced and displayed their art in an alternative exhibition venue. They incorporated site specific works into a public urban space by participating in exhibitions in the downtown core, thus altering the city landscape.

In organizing the installation projects, the Embassy Cultural House not only maintained networks of support with local and national artists, but they also worked in collaboration with other cultural organizations in the region including Cross-Cultural Learner Centre, the Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada and Woodland Cultural Centre (Benner, Interview with Crandall, et. al. 15; Hassan, Interview with Crandall, et. al., 10-12; Stach, Personal Interview, 2-7). They thus extended the aims and objectives of Helen and Egon Haller who established the hotel as a family owned and operated business by serving the needs of local residents and community groups. The installations thus gained meaning through the interactions between the owners, workers, tenants, artists, musicians and performers. By displaying the works in the hotel, the collective engaged in collaborative practices and mobilized communities in the nearby vicinity, thus altering the neighborhood of east London. They facilitated commercial and cultural initiatives and provided people with the opportunity to develop personal and

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professional affiliations which impacted their sense of identity and belonging in the surrounding region.

Similarly, the owners of Cameron House extended their facilities in order to better serve neighborhood communities. Located at 408 Queen Street West in Toronto, Ontario the hotel includes a bar on the first floor and room rentals on the second floor (Figure 7 and 8). In 1981 siblings Paul Sanella and Anne Marie Sanella purchased the hotel in partnership with Herb Tookey. Paul and Anne Marie Sanella’s brother Michael Sanella also served as a silent business partner along with his associates Al Irwin, and Michael and Eric Mac. Although Michael Sanella and his associates were co-owners, Paul and Anne Marie Sanella and Herb Tookey took over the responsibility of managing and operating the premises on a daily basis (Sanella, Personal Interview, 3, 5-6; Tookey 1). Like Embassy Hotel, Cameron House was to a large extent a family owned and operated business and in tending to the needs of the customers, the managers worked through familial relations.

In taking over the property, the new owners established rapport with the low income tenants who lived in the accommodations upstairs and drank in the tavern downstairs. According to Paul Sanella and Tookey a few months preceding the sale, 

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8 Before taking over Cameron House, Anne Marie Sanella managed and operated a number of restaurants and bars in the Toronto area. By contrast Paul Sanella and Herb Tookey were new to the hotel business. Previously Sanella produced film and television programs in New York and Los Angeles, meanwhile Tookey completed his doctorate in psychology after moving to Canada from the United States (Sanella, Personal Interview, 1-6; Tookey 1).

9 Michael Sanella owned a mortgaging company which he operated with Al Irwin, and brothers Michael and Eric Mac.

10 Paul and Anne Marie Sanella and Al Irwin continue to own the hotel to this day. However Herb Tookey, Michael Sanella, and Michael and Eric Mac later sold off their share of the property. In 1989 Cindy Matthews and Charmaine Beddoe bought a portion of the business, but Beddoe later sold off her share. My thesis focuses on the period from 1981 to 1989 when Paul and Anne Marie Sanella and Herb Tookey managed and operated the hotel (Sanella, Personal Interview, 3-8, Tookey 1-2).

11 Given their extensive involvement with the artists’ projects at Cameron House, I rely predominantly on Paul Sanella and Herb Tookey’s recollections in my analysis of the hotel. Tookey for instance maintains an
there was a fire on the second floor which forced the residents to evacuate. The owners accommodated the patrons by finding some of the men new lodgings in the surrounding area (Sanella, Personal Interview, 11; Tookey 3-6). While the previous inhabitants moved to other boarding houses, some of the existing staff continued to work at Cameron House. In order to expand business and attract new customers, Sanella and Tookey completed repairs to the single occupancy rooms.

Figure 7. Cameron House, Toronto, Ontario. Photograph by Peter MacCallum. 1987. Peter MacCallum Personal Collection, Toronto.

archival collection of paintings, drawings, posters, articles and letters which proved particularly useful to my research.
Rather than rent the renovated accommodations to the former residents, they changed clientele, thus simultaneously enabling and dispersing community formations. They offered rooms to musicians, artists, writers, actors and videographers who took up tenancy in the building (Sanella, Personal Interview, 8-10, 12, 19-33; Tookey 2, 4-10, 12-13, 15-19; Werner, "Tales from the Cameron", 63-65).\footnote{Like the Embassy Hotel, Cameron House functioned as a boarding house by providing single room occupancies at low cost for short and long term tenants.} The artists became friends, colleagues and associates with the owners and gained a sense of belonging within the neighborhood. In occupying the hotel they developed networks of rapport with people in
their fields of profession, yet they displaced the former inhabitants who moved into other lodgings after the new owners took over the premises. Within this urban context cultural art production intersected processes of dislocation through which artists claimed public space for exhibition and performance programs at the expense of the people who formerly lived on the architectural site.

The artists thus took up a paradoxical position within processes of gentrification which perpetuated the uneven distribution of wealth and power across city districts. As low income earners they moved into impoverished neighborhoods where they rented accommodations for reasonable rates. They altered the surrounding environment on a social and economic level by opening up production, distribution and exhibition centres, thus contributing to the revitalization of downtown cores. However they inhabited commercial and residential spaces which previously served people living in poverty who formed part of the local community. The artists marginalized another economically disenfranchised group, who relocated to other sectors of the city thus leading towards the dissolution of neighborhood affiliations as developed through daily interactions between residents.

Cultural art production thus became a site of contention as people asserted and contested claims to property rights and ownership in the city. In occupying Cameron House the artists implicated themselves in the struggles over urban regeneration while facilitating practices of art-making. Long term resident artist Deanne Taylor described the ongoing rapport between the hotel tenants who developed familial relations (24). She critiqued communal concepts of cohabitation and drew attention to the changing subject positions of the residents, thus destabilizing romanticized notions of social cohesion. Taylor’s observations highlighted processes of dialogic exchange through which people
negotiated shifting perspectives and points of view by accessing existing structures of power and knowledge.  

In moving into the hotel, the artists engaged with the theatre and music communities who resided in and visited the premises. Through these interactions, they built networks of support and developed multi-disciplinary approaches to art-making (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 2-3, 14-17, 27-30; Sanella, Personal Interview, 12-13, 22-23, 29-30; Tookey 5-6, 8-10, 13-16). They offered each other advice and exchanged information, thus extending their professional affiliations through casual conversation. Paul Sanella described the communications between and among the artists, musicians and theatre professionals. He suggested that they engaged in collegial dialogues through which people facilitated, negotiated and administered interdisciplinary art projects (Sanella, Personal Interview, 22). The Cameron House served the creative communities who experimented with different working processes, thus breaking down the boundaries between art, music, video and theatre. They developed new and innovative ways of producing and exhibiting their works by participating in discussions at the hotel.

In addition to coordinating various activities and events, the artists created site specific performances and installations which they incorporated in different spaces throughout the interior and exterior of the building including the entrances, hallways, bars and bathroom (Sanella, Personal Interview, 19-22, 26-28; Tookey 11-17). (See Appendix B for list of permanent installations at Cameron House). Alternately functioning as an exhibition venue, neighborhood bar and rooming house, the hotel combined public and

13 Deanne Taylor moved into the Cameron House in about 1982 and continues to reside there today. She also set up her work studio on the premises where she co-produced multimedia performances in collaboration with the collective Hummer Sisters (1974 - present) and the theatre company Videocabaret (1976- present) (Hollingsworth and Taylor n. pag.; Lypchuk, “The Hummer Sisters”, 261, 264-265; “Videocabaret: A Brief History”, n. pag.).
private spaces where people co-existed on a daily basis. In producing site specific installations in the hotel, the artists altered the relationship between the works and the architectural surroundings, and changed the ways in which viewers and patrons perceived their environment.

In evaluating these collaborations, Deanne Taylor suggested that creative communities organized “a critical mass of activity” (6). She described the music venues, theatre companies and exhibition galleries which formed the local art scene. Located within this urban context, Cameron House served as a meeting place where people offered each other support in their creative endeavours. This “critical mass” of artists, musicians and theatre professionals mobilized cultural art production in the city of Toronto. They developed programs of activities and events which contributed to the revitalization of inner city cores by enabling and facilitating collaborative networks of exchange between multiple and overlapping creative communities.

The Gladstone Hotel similarly hosts art, music and theatre programs. Located at 1214 Queen Street West, the hotel includes bars\(^\text{14}\) and a ballroom on the first floor and room rentals on the second, third and forth floor (Figures 9 and 10) (See Appendix C for Gladstone Hotel Floor Plans). In 2000 real estate developer Michael Tippen purchased the premises in partnership with local entrepreneur Margaret Zeidler who received financial support from her family. Due to differences in business practices, Zeidler parted ways with Tippen and eventually gained full ownership of the hotel in 2002. Shortly after receiving property rights, Margaret Zeidler turned over the management of the hotel to her younger sister Christina Zeidler (Roemer and Graham).

\(^{14}\) In addition to the Melody Bar, the hotel comprises an Art Bar where artists produce and exhibit their works.
Like the owners of Embassy Hotel and Cameron House, the Zeidlers worked through familial relations in operating the building facilities. Christina Zeidler received advice from her father and architect, Eberhard Zeidler\textsuperscript{15} who assisted with the renovations of the hotel. In addition she consulted with her sister Margaret Zeidler who served as director for various development projects in Toronto including the renovated warehouses

\textsuperscript{15}Eberhard Zeidler was an upper middle class Jewish immigrant who trained in Germany at the Bauhaus which offered courses on architecture, urban planning and industrial design. After moving to Canada, Zeidler became a partner in the firm, Zeidler Partnerships Architect and completed several building projects in Toronto including the Eaton Centre (1979), Queen’s Quay Terminal (1983), Park Plaza Hotel addition (1987), Royal York Hotel addition (1991) and Ford Centre for the Performing Arts (1993) (Cohen, “The Zeidler Effect: Part I”, n. pag.; Bayer, Gropius and Gropius 2-25).
at 401 Richmond Street and 215 Spadina Avenue. In restoring these buildings, Margaret Zeidler divided the interior architecture into a series of lofts which she rented out to retail businesses, art centres and non-profit organizations. She thus enabled the co-existence of “communities within community” and opened up public urban spaces to cultural and commercial initiatives (Bottomley, et. al. n. pag.). Christina Zeidler followed this philosophy of urban development in renovating and reconstructing Gladstone Hotel.

In order to expand business, she updated the facilities and services thus attracting new clientele. Due to the increase in room rentals it was no longer feasible to retain the existing low income residents who relocated to affordable housing in the surrounding vicinity with the assistance of the Zeidler family. In their film Last Call at the Gladstone (2007) Derreck Roemer and Neil Graham examined the eviction of the tenants from the hotel building.\(^{16}\) They focused on the struggles and tensions between the owners and the residents as they asserted and contested their rights to reside in and inhabit the architectural site. In interviewing the former tenants, they described the hardships they experienced as they changed residences in the local area where increased rental rates made it difficult for people living in poverty to acquire housing.

Many of the hotel residents lived on welfare or old age pension and their financial situation left them with limited options for living accommodations ("Hotel Architecture and History", n. pag.; Zeidler 1-3; Roemer and Graham). In discussing the change in clientele Christina Zeidler described processes of gentrification in the surrounding neighborhood. She indicated that she “embarked on a journey of dealing with these questions. . . . the immediate concern was where [were the tenants and workers] going to go?” (2) Some of the inhabitants lived in the hotel for a number of years and the building

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\(^{16}\) For further discussion of Roemer and Graham’s film see Chapter 4.
offered an alternative to the shelters and welfare housing in the city. In vacating the premises, they subsequently took up residency in other hotels which offered cheap rates yet provided substandard accommodations. Many of these buildings were in a state of disrepair and the owners provided inadequate services in managing the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities.

As corporate businesses purchased properties in Parkdale for development, it became increasingly difficult for low income residents to remain in the neighborhood. In renovating the hotel architecture in order to bring it up to health and safety standards, the Zeidlers thus confronted issues of gentrification. In collaboration with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and the Parkdale Community Health Centre, they relocated the tenants to new lodgings and provided financial support when possible to help them through the move. While some of the residents rented single occupancy rooms in nearby hotels and boarding houses, others required medical attention due to mental and health issues and admitted themselves into extended care facilities ("Hotel Architecture and History", n. pag.; Zeidler 1-3; Roemer and Graham).

Christina Zeidler retained some of the existing staff and many of the former inhabitants of the hotel continued to visit the bars. At the same time, the clientele diversified to include artists, writers, musicians and theatre professionals who attended the various activities hosted by the hotel (Hannon 59-60; Zeidler 1-4, 10-13). By engaging in cultural production, the artists developed contacts with their colleagues, peers and mentors. However they occupied public urban spaces by displacing the previous tenants who lived, worked and socialized on the premises before the Zeidlers took over the property. In their film Last Call at the Gladstone (2007) Derreck Roemer and Neil Graham interviewed the residents and staff who recounted their experiences at the hotel.
They described their daily interactions with each other and discussed the personal and familial relations they established over the years. Their absence from the architectural site signified the dissolution of community affiliations through which people made claims to socio-economic and ethno-cultural identities.

The process of dislocation surrounding the building renovations raises questions about the politics of art-making which simultaneously enabled and disenabled social formations. While artists opened up the hotel space to creative interventions by altering the meaning and function of the surrounding environment, they refurbished the architectural décor thus gentrifying the building site. The resulting rental increases proved detrimental to people living in poverty and contributed towards the uneven distribution of wealth and power in city districts. As low income earners, artists contended with the negative impacts of urbanization which resulted in inflated property values in the neighborhood of Parkdale. They established production, exhibition and distribution centres in this sector of the city and participated in revitalization schemes which supported the development of arts and culture. Yet these rebuilding projects resulted in the eviction of low income tenants who became expendable within processes of gentrification.

The artists thus took up a paradoxical position within the context of urban renewal by both facilitating and dispersing community affiliations - a process I explored above vis-à-vis the Cameron House and the Embassy Hotel. In recounting his experiences living and working at Gladstone Hotel, resident artist Bruno Billio^17 described the bonds and connections he developed with the hotel staff. He indicated that “if we [knew] who

^17 From 2002 onward Bruno Billio participated in the residency program established by Christina Zeidler shortly after she took over management of the hotel. This program provided select artists with the opportunity to live and work in the building (Billio 1, 13, 18, 22-23).
everyone [was] and we [had] an issue with someone we just talk[ed] about it . . . . Or [didn’t] do anything about it . . . but knowing that the possibility [was] always there” (32). Like Helen Haller and Deanne Taylor, Bruno Billio referred to the hotel workers as family and drew attention to the networks of rapport that evolved through casual conversations. These systems of communication facilitated processes of dialogic exchange by enabling interactions between varying constituencies.

In responding to the differing perspectives and points of views of the hotel staff, Billio gained insight into their personal lives. He explored the changing dynamics of their relationship by acknowledging the specific issues and concerns they confronted on a daily basis. He examined community formations and described reciprocal acts of speaking and listening through which people exchanged shared and collective memories. Billio suggested that these personal narratives gave voice to local knowledges and explored shifting subject positions. In discussing the varying circumstances of the tenants who lived at the hotel, he indicated that the predominantly male clientele came “from out East or from up North . . . . they were old gentlemen who had part time jobs or they were retired and had a pension” (8). He examined the tenuous financial situations of the residents who contended with the negative impacts of gentrification.

The eviction of the low income tenants at Gladstone Hotel was endemic of changes in the geo-political landscape. The expansion of capitalist markets benefited the professional managerial class who relocated to the inner city. Meanwhile government cut backs on public programs including old age pension and welfare proved detrimental for people living in poverty. Urban renewal schemes reinforced this class divide by perpetuating the uneven distribution of wealth and power within and across localities and regions. These social and political inequities provided evidence of the shifting
geographies of power through which people staked claims to public city spaces. Working within this urban context, artists contended with the paradoxes of gentrification. They formed part of the neighborhood community which included low income tenants who struggled to maintain their homes as middle class residents moved into the area. At the same time they engaged in cultural art production which contributed to the revitalization of the downtown core, thus resulting in inflated rental costs and leading towards the displacement of economically disenfranchised people.

In renovating and reconstructing the hotel building, the Zeidler family aimed to retain the architectural heritage of the site which became a meeting place for creative communities. In order to accommodate artists, Christina Zeidler organized exhibitions and workshops which involved collaborative exchanges between painters, sculptors, videographers, film makers, woodworkers, ceramicists, textile designers and architects (Zeidler 12-14). Further she diversified the programs at Gladstone Hotel to include music performances, theatrical productions, cultural festivals, neighborhood fairs, wine tastings and fine dining events. Through these various activities, Zeidler catered to community groups of differing sexualized, gendered, ethno-cultural and racialized identities. In particular, queer collectives organized exhibitions, film screenings, book readings and weekly dance nights at the hotel. Other community groups also coordinated Jewish film screenings, an African Music Festival, a French Canadian Music Festival and a Parkdale neighborhood concert.18

In examining the expanded facilities and services, Christina Zeidler considered the ways in which art and cultural organizations functioned in the urban downtown core. She

18 For further information on events at Gladstone Hotel see back issues of the monthly newsletter Gladstone Bag at: http://www.gladstonehotel.com/newsletter.html.
described the interactions and conversations between the communities who inhabited the hotel building and suggested that “the stories [were] so varied, there [were] very small projects, very big projects and I [felt] like we [were] engaged in . . . that dialogue” (13). According to Zeidler, these neighborhood groups changed the meaning and function of the architectural site. Further they contributed to city revitalization by altering people’s conceptions and experiences of public urban spaces. In examining community affiliations, Zeidler described the claims at stake within discussions on gentrification by pointing out the changing visions and agendas of local collectives who co-existed in the surrounding district.

The owners of Embassy Hotel, Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel thus served creative communities who developed networks of support with colleagues and mentors. While engaging in cultural production, the artists explored alternative ways of thinking and living. They completed site specific works for exhibitions facilitated by curators who established and sustained connections with business organizations and cultural collectives. They engaged in what Suzi Gablik and Grant Kester refer to as processes of dialogic exchange by working through the multiple and at times conflicting objectives of the varying constituencies who inhabited the hotels (Gablik 146-166; Kester 82-123). By altering the architectural décor, the artists changed the urban landscape and re-articulated historical material geographies through which people made claims to public city spaces.

Creative communities took up a paradoxical position by engaging in cultural art production in the downtown core. They lived, worked and socialized in the nearby vicinity and developed connections with the residents and workers who inhabited the neighborhood. Yet they also displaced the former tenants by opening up production, distribution and exhibition centres in residential and commercial districts. As low income
earners artists contended with the negative impacts of urban renewal which resulted in inflated rental costs thus leaving them with limited options for affordable housing. Moving into impoverished sectors of the city, they altered the surrounding environment by mobilizing the creative economy in local neighborhoods, thus contributing to the revitalization of the downtown core.

However, in occupying public urban spaces they marginalized economically disenfranchised communities who experienced forced evictions as business owners and cultural organizations rented and purchased buildings in the area. The ensuing struggles over property rights and ownership thus revealed the contradictions and tensions underlying gentrification which simultaneously opened up and limited people’s access to city districts. It is precisely this dichotomy which came into play when artists produced installations in hotels and re-envisioned the urban landscape by changing the form and function of the architectural sites. In occupying the premises, the artists reformulated community and familial relations and negotiated the differing goals and objectives of the owners, staff and patrons who inhabited the premises.

**Creative and Capitalist Economies**

The multiple and at times conflicting agendas of the tenants and customers reveal the competing ideological discourses underlying gentrification. Policies on urban planning served the interests and needs of differing constituencies including business entrepreneurs, government organizations and neighborhood collectives. Building upon my analysis of community formations outlined above, I now examine the development of creative and capitalist economies in urban downtown cores. I suggest here that artists take up a paradoxical position by simultaneously perpetuating and disrupting the production of cultural and economic capital in city neighborhoods.
It is important to note the links and differences between cultural and economic capital. By cultural capital, I mean the modes of production and distribution which facilitated practices of art-making. Artists engaged in tactics of resistance and disrupted existing structures of power by critiquing hierarchical systems of governance. The creative economies which evolved out of these institutional critiques thus facilitated processes of social exchange through which people re-articulated community politics. Negotiating changing subject positions, artists developed alternative ways of living and thinking in response to concerns for social and political equity. Art-making thus underwrote the economy by mobilizing collectivities to develop creative approaches to re-envisioning public city spaces. These processes of critical reflection impacted upon the cultural, economic and political production of space by enabling communities to re-conceptualize the urban landscape. By contrast economic capital refers to the purchase and sale of goods and services within profit driven markets. Corporate and government institutions, for instance, promoted consumer spending while reducing funding for public and welfare programs. Capitalist economies thus perpetuated the uneven distribution of wealth and power across geographic regions.

Artists participated in cultural production within creative and capitalist economies and thus negotiated overlapping public and private interests. Rosemary Donegan describes the ways in which artists reformulated structures of power and knowledge by developing studio and exhibition practices. She describes the local art scene along Queen Street West during the 1980s and argues that artists met and socialized in private workshops as opposed to commercial galleries where they displayed and sold their works. She distinguishes between an art community “which [was] a process and product of people, work and ideas” and an art scene “which [was] a phenomena engendered by the
media, the art market and real estate boom” (Donegan, “What Ever Happened to Queen Street West?”, 12). Artists established their careers and garnered recognition in their professional fields by marketing themselves through gallery exhibitions, newspaper publicity and interpersonal communications. They not only developed networks of support with curators and academics, but they also re-articulated critical art discourse as determined by their colleagues and peers who adjudicated local, regional and national art councils (Donegan, “What Ever Happened to Queen Street West?”, 12-13, 15, 19-20).

According to Donegan artists negotiated professional affiliations by opening up exhibition, production and distribution centres in the downtown core. In discussing creative communities and city development, Donegan references Charles Landry’s analysis of urban renewal which examines cultural initiatives in municipal regions (Donegan, “Intersections: The Creative Grid in Downtown Toronto”, 109-112, 115). Focusing on the city neighborhoods from Queen Street West to Spadina Avenue, she describes the galleries, bars, restaurants, retail stores and studios in the surrounding area. She posits that “it [was] the confluence of social, economic, and geographic forces . . . that provide[d] the material, cultural, and social resources for creative people” (Donegan, “Intersections: The Creative Grid in Downtown Toronto”, 115). Within this theoretical framework cultural art production supported the urban economy and sustained community neighborhoods. Artists thus engaged in creative processes of exchange by facilitating and rearticulating the social, political and economic production of city spaces.

Jennifer Papararo similarly analyzes the ways in which artists reformulated institutional structures of power. She argues that artists subverted exhibition practices which established art works as commodity items for production and consumption in capitalist economies (Papararo 54-60). Instead they produced installations in storefronts,
school buildings and houses, and examined the historical material context of the
surrounding space. The pieces gained meaning in a particular architectural site and lost
their significance when removed from that location. Thus site specific art did not function
as commodity which people distributed and circulated in the market place. Artists
challenged where, and how, people ‘viewed’ and consumed art by creating installations in
public urban spaces where residents interacted and socialized on a daily basis (Papararo
37-49).

In exhibiting works in alternative venues, artists negotiated the system of funding
provided by art councils which offered grants to cover the costs of producing and
disseminating their works. They established connections with artist run centres which
provided administrative and financial support for exhibition projects (Papararo 50-56).
Creative communities thus rearticulated professional affiliations that extended from
granting agencies to artists’ collectives (Papararo 66-67). They also participated in gallery
exhibitions and opened up museums to critical interventions by subverting the modes of
interpretation surrounding mechanisms of display. Artists destabilized the ideological
discourses underlying curatorial practices that categorized and classified art according to
hierarchical systems of evaluation. They disrupted modernist discourses which made
universal claims to truth and knowledge by reinforcing elitist concepts of aesthetic taste
(Papararo 45-49, 61-65). In addition to examining the institutional context within which
curators collected and assessed works, creative communities critiqued art administrators
who monitored and surveyed exhibition spaces. Further, they revealed how paintings and
sculptures took on meaning for visiting audiences and questioned who produced and
consumed works in museums.
Like Rosemary Donegan, Jennifer Papararo evaluates the competing ideologies underlying creative and capitalist economies. She argues that artists reformulated and redefined internal and external structures of power by creating works in art institutions and alternative venues. Extending this line of analysis, Donegan suggests that creative communities exhibited and distributed their works in workshop studios and commercial galleries, thus contributing to the revitalization of the downtown core (Donegan, “What Ever Happened to Queen Street West?”, 19-20; Papararo 45-49, 54-65). Artists facilitated the production and consumption of cultural and economic capital by participating in hotel exhibitions. They displayed their pieces in business establishments where people used the facilities and services provided by the hotel management. They thus responded to the needs of the customers and clients who inhabited the premises, exposing the paradoxical and contradictory workings of the creative economy.

In examining the histories of Embassy Hotel, Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel, I draw attention to the conflicting agendas of private entrepreneurs and creative communities. By producing site specific installations in hotels which combined bars, cafés, galleries, performance venues and room accommodations, artists worked in hybrid spaces which blurred the boundaries between public/private and commerce/culture. They organized performances and installations for the hotel owners who established connections with cultural centres, retail stores, bars and cafés in the surrounding area. Creative communities thus existed alongside business organizations and neighborhood collectives which followed differing approaches to revitalizing the downtown core. These competing ideologies bring into focus the convergence and divergence of cultural and economic capital which served opposing public and private interests.
The proprietors negotiated these complex processes by developing community and economic strategies. They not only supported artists, but they also tended to the daily needs of operating the business by offering services for local and visiting tourists. In catering to consumer markets and capitalist economies, the hotel owners facilitated cultural art production and offered artists exhibition spaces to organize site specific projects. They established alternative economic models in opposition to large scale corporate development by sustaining creative communities through the art and music programs they hosted at the hotels. Helen Haller, for instance, worked alongside other family owned companies by operating Embassy Hotel in the district of East London which entered into economic decline during the 1970s and 1980s.

Whereas government and business organizations constructed residential and commercial complexes in upscale neighborhoods in West London, Haller contributed to the local economy in the working class sector of Dundas East where many low income workers and residents lived due to the cheap property values in the area. Haller interacted with local entrepreneurs who opened up social services, bakeries, restaurants and bookstores in the surrounding vicinity with varying degrees of success. In addition Haller supported cultural development by providing painters, sculptors, film makers and musicians with a venue to produce, exhibit and perform their works, thus patronizing creative communities (Haller 1-4). She offered the art collective, Embassy Cultural House the restaurant space rent free for regular ongoing exhibitions and allowed them to install site specific works in different locations throughout the building (Figure 11).

In the formative years of the collective’s existence Haller also gave them a modest budget to cover the costs of artists’ honorariums and travel expenses (Haller 2, 3, 5, 11; Hassan, Personal Interview, 12-13, 16-18). Further she established funds for the Embassy
Cultural House Tabloid which the collective published on a regular basis and circulated to various art and cultural centers in the local and surrounding regions. The tabloid served as media publicity both for the collective and the hotel by providing information on the exhibitions and performances hosted on the premises. In addition the artists solicited businesses and non-profit organizations to place advertisements in the newspaper, thus developing connections with other commercial establishments and cultural centres in the area (Benner, Interview with Crandall, et. al. 12, 19; Haller 2-3; Hassan, Personal Interview, 10).


In supporting the programs and events organized by the collective, Haller negotiated the varying interests and agendas of the artists, staff and tenants. She managed the daily upkeep of the rooms, bars and lounges ensuring that the facilities met with the
business standards established by the tourist industry. The collective supported Haller’s goals by enhancing the interior décor of the hotel and contributing to the architectural renovations. More specifically they incorporated installations into the rooms and hallways of the building, thus altering the design and function of the hotel space. While organizing exhibition programs, the artists contended with the logistics of working in a business establishment which combined residences and entertainment venues.

In discussing the relationship between the collective and the hotel management, founding member Jamelie Hassan examined the economics of working in a commercial space. She drew attention to the material and financial resources provided by Embassy Hotel which enabled and facilitated the site specific programs organized by the collective. Hassan described the overlap of art and commerce by discussing the push and pull of creative and business economies which supported each other while serving divergent purposes (Hassan, Personal Interview 13). These tensions and contradictions emerged through the collectives’ interactions with the tenants and workers who inhabited the premises.

The hotel served various functions by providing lodgings, employment and entertainment for local and visiting customers, staff and patrons. However the agendas and objectives of these varying constituencies did not always coincide. In subsidizing Embassy Cultural House, Helen Haller hoped the artists would regularly visit the bar and restaurant, thus bringing business to the hotel. With the exception of the core members very few of the artists returned to the premises to attend other events and activities. Haller’s goals thus differed from the collective. In operating and supervising the hotel, her priority was to tend to the needs of the clients and the patrons some of whom conflicted with the creative communities.
A few of the employees who managed the restaurant covered up the art on the walls thus preventing visitors from viewing the works (Benner, Interview with Crandall et al., 25-26). Further the short and long term residents had different reactions to the site specific installations. While some responded positively to the pieces and ensured the safekeeping of the art, others took a more negative view and in a few instances showed complete disregard by damaging the works (Benner, Interview with Crandall et al., 10-11, 23-24). A number of the customers attempted to alter the pieces by removing or adding components to the existing installations. Fixing the damage required the artists to conserve the works which came at additional costs. The written and verbal agreements which they entered into with Embassy Cultural House, however, only covered the time period in which they produced and exhibited the art.

Although Haller checked the installations regularly, she could not implement the conservation standards necessary to keep the pieces intact in their original condition. Her responsibilities as the hotel owner made it difficult for her to continuously monitor the exhibition displays. Haller’s needs as a business entrepreneur thus sometimes conflicted with the objectives of the artists who followed exhibition mandates which did not necessarily take into account the upkeep of the permanent installations. However, Ron Benner who was a founding member of Embassy Cultural House not only assisted artists with the exhibition of their works, but he also helped Haller manage the maintenance of the pieces after the artists completed them. He was an exception among the collective and none of the other artists who produced site specific installations for the hotel repaired their works which suffered from the daily wear and tear of people coming and going through the building (Benner, Interview with Crandall, et. al. 13-14, 24; Haller 3).
In negotiating the multiple and at times conflicting perspectives of the owners and clients, the Embassy Cultural House developed an alternative approach to art making by exhibiting works in urban sites. More specifically they displayed installations in the “working/living” environment of the hotel in opposition to the regulated and monitored spaces of museums. Whereas gallery curators followed strict guidelines regarding the preservation and conservation of art collections, the Embassy Cultural House displayed site specific works in the restaurant, bars and rooms where people ate, drank, slept and socialized. In describing the relationship between the collective and museums, Hassan indicated that the artists engaged in “a certain oppositional practice” and resisted gallery institutions by creating art in urban sites that combined public venues with private accommodations (Hassan, Personal Interview, 4).

The artists participated in critical interventions and disrupted museum practices by exhibiting installations in the hotel building. They changed where they created their works and altered the ways in which people perceived and understood art. In developing critical aesthetics, they disrupted curatorial methods of approach in galleries. Museum administrators learned from artists who experimented with new ways of hanging and presenting works, thus subverting traditional modes of display. It is precisely this shift between art institutions and alternative exhibition spaces which Embassy Cultural House contended with. In addition to producing installations in public urban spaces, artists exhibited their works in galleries by maintaining networks of rapport with curators, critics and art dealers. Moving back and forth between these two locations, they worked both inside and outside of museums, thus subverting internal and external structures of power and knowledge. They disrupted the systems of evaluation surrounding gallery exhibitions which reinforced elitist concepts of taste.
In order to extend their programs, Embassy Cultural House collaborated with artist run centres and university art departments. Further they established connections with regional and national art councils. As their programming grew in scope, they extended the membership eventually forming an artist board in 1987 (Benner, Interview with Crandall et al., 4-5, 12, 15-16, 19; Hassan, “Statement From the E.C.H. Board”, n. pag., 2; Stach, Personal Interview, 2-7). In addition they applied for short term project grants from the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council which provided them with funding to assist with the coordination of exhibitions, lectures and workshops. The increased finances allowed them to pay participating artists higher fees and to cover costs for travel, accommodations and marketing (Benner, Personal Interview, 1-2; Hassan, Personal Interview, 10-11).

Embassy Cultural House collective thus developed a flexible approach to programming rather then following annual schedules and operating budgets as required by long term grants for artist run centers. Further they maintained their relationship with the hotel management as opposed to functioning as an institutionally mandated art organization (Benner, Personal Interview, 1-2; Hassan, Personal Interview, 11-13). Although they followed administrative procedures in applying for funding, they retained an open door policy which allowed them to continue negotiating processes of exchange with neighborhood communities. They thus worked with and against bureaucratic institutions by

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19 I was unable to find the names of artist board members for 1987, but the Embassy Cultural House Tabloid lists the following members in the edition dated January 1988: Ron Benner, Sharron Forrest, Wyn Geleynse, Jamelie Hassan, Jean Hay, Kim Moodie, Jean Spence and Peter Rist (“Artist Board”, 2).
20 For more detailed information on Embassy Cultural House grant applications see documentation files for the following exhibitions in Embassy Cultural House Archives, London Public Library: The Body & Society (1988); Four Installations (1987-1988); Siting Resistance (1990); and Voices from the City (1989).
reformulating the regulations surrounding the management and funding of
exhibition and public programs (Hassan, Personal Interview, 4, 12-13).

The owners of Cameron House also developed connections with artist run centers
and parallel galleries while operating a commercial establishment. The Sanella family
purchased the Cameron House in partnership with Herb Tookey at a time when the
surrounding neighborhood experienced a gradual influx of retail stores, bars, clubs,
restaurants and galleries. In taking over the building, the Sanella family and Tookey
entered the real estate market when property values were relatively inexpensive along
Queen Street West. As socio-economic conditions shifted and new businesses moved into
the area, the resulting boom in building development drove up rental prices and mortgage
costs with detrimental consequences for smaller companies who could not compete with
large scale corporations (Taylor 10-13).

Working in this urban context, co-owners Paul Sanella and Herb Tookey
supported the art community by providing them with studio space and exhibition venues
on the premises. While benefiting financially from the effects of gentrification, they
supported the creative economy which depended upon alternative modes of cultural
production (Sanella, Personal Interview, 29). They worked alongside of and in resistance
to capitalist markets which sustained corporate development, thus contending with the
uneasy push and pull between the creative and business classes. In promoting art, music
and theatre programs, the proprietors opened up public urban space to multi-disciplinary
approaches. Sanella and Tookey made the architectural site accessible to the
“heterogeneously complex neighborhood” in the surrounding district (Tookey 10).

More specifically they offered accommodations to musicians, artists, writers and
theatre professionals who established production, exhibition and distribution centers in
the downtown core. The owners offered artists rooms rent free in exchange for which they completed various jobs such as tending bar, waiting tables, renovating the building and producing art for display (Sanella, Personal Interview, 12, 18-21). In some instances artists who did not live in the hotel completed installations and received modest compensation from Sanella and Tookey. Although a few artists disputed the pay they earned, the majority agreed to this trade system which gave them flexibility in working out their living accommodations, while providing them with space to exhibit their works (Sanella, Personal Interview, 26-27).

In contrast to Embassy Hotel, the artists in the Cameron House regularly visited the bar where they discussed current and upcoming art projects. The owners thus expanded their clientele by developing networks of rapport with artists who invited their friends and colleagues to meet them on the premises (Sanella, Personal Interview, 12, 19-24, 26-32; Tookey 2, 5-6, 8-10, 12-19). Sanella described the relationship between the commercial business and the art exhibitions indicating that “. . . we pick[ed] and cho[se] what we th[ought] [was] going to actually enhance or work or benefit either the business, the legend, the reputation or just completely interesting things” (Sanella, Personal Interview, 33). The owners followed an alternative approach to entrepreneurship by prioritizing the creative communities and following a selection criteria based upon their own assessment of current art trends.

While catering to artists, Sanella and Tookey also tended to the logistics of managing the hotel. This left them with limited time and resources to maintain the upkeep of the works exhibited in the building. Some of the interior installations deteriorated due to the daily wear and tear of people coming and going through the bars and hallways. Similarly the exterior sculptures and wall murals collected dirt and grim from the smoke
and heat emitted from vehicular traffic in the surrounding city streets (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 8-9; Brousseau, Personal Interview, 5-7). With no provisions set aside to cover the cost of preserving the works, it was left up to the artists to fix and mend the damage. These repairs raise questions about the preservation and conservation of permanent installations displayed in hotel buildings. Although artists moved into public urban spaces in order to resist the system of monitoring and surveillance enforced in gallery institutions, they still grappled with curatorial issues. In creating works for alternative exhibitions venues, they wanted to maintain their art in good condition which required labour and services not available through the hotel owners.

In addition the content and context of the installations changed as the proprietors renovated the Cameron House during the 1980s and 1990s (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 4-7, 8, 27-28; Brousseau, Personal Interview, 5, 27-28). They reconstructed and repainted the walls, floors and ceilings of the bars, hallways and room rentals. Because artists incorporated installations into the architectural sites any renovations on the building impacted the form and meaning of the works. While in some instances these alterations enhanced the art, in other cases they completely changed the look and appearances of the pieces, thus detracting from the artists’ original intent. The renovations thus provided evidence of the intersecting and at times conflicting goals of the artists and owners. They re-envisioned the hotel space according to different agendas as determined by their needs as commercial entrepreneurs and creative communities. Whereas the artists disrupted exhibition display by altering the design and function of the surrounding environment, the proprietors reconstructed the interior and exterior architecture in order to appeal to consumer audiences.
Further the owners of Cameron House used the art to market and promote the hotel to potential clients so that they could expand and develop the business. For instance they incorporated photographic reproductions of the site specific works in advertisements featured in such journals as *C Magazine* and *Impulse* (Dean 9; Goldstein, Personal Interview, 25; Sanella, Personal Interview, 15). Publicizing programs of events in journals to which artists, curators, critics and academics subscribed, the owners established the hotel as an alternative exhibition venue. They circulated images of the installations through the media and developed logo designs which re-produced and re-appropriated photographs of the works on display. Through these marketing strategies, they presented the Cameron House as a neighborhood bar which supported the underground art scene in Toronto.

Unlike the Embassy Cultural House collective, Sanella and Tookey did not collaborate with curators in the planning and implementation of exhibitions. They hosted ad hoc programs which artists proposed through word of mouth in contrast to the more formalized submission processes and mandate policies established by galleries (Tookey 13). The Cameron House served as a meeting place where the staff and board members of artist run centres got together at the end of the work day (Sanella, Personal Interview, 31-32; Tookey 18-19). Further the owners provided office and studio spaces to such art collectives as Chromazone\textsuperscript{21} and Hummer Sisters\textsuperscript{22} who organized exhibitions and

\textsuperscript{21} Chromazone was a collective of artists founded in 1981 in Toronto, Ontario. The members included Oliver Girling, Andy Fabo, Sybil Goldstein, Rae Johnson and Tony Wilson. The collective worked from their own gallery space at 320 Spadina until 1983 and then moved their offices to a room upstairs in Cameron House ("Chronology of Artist-Initiated Activity in Canada, 1939-1987" 125, 127, 135; Goldstein, “The Chromazone Chronology”, n. pag.; Goldstein, Personal Interview, 10, 12-16). For further discussion of Chromazone collective see Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{22} The Hummer Sisters was a collective of video and performance artists founded in 1974 in Toronto. The original members included Marien Lewis, D. Ann Taylor (a.k.a. Deanne Taylor), Janet Burke and Bobbe Besold. The collective worked from the artist run centre, A Space during the late seventies and moved their
performances at various off site locations in Toronto. Although working outside museum establishments, the artists extended their connections with gallery institutions through these formal and informal channels of communication, and established their reputations in the local art scene.

Sanella and Tookey thus catered to the art community which followed particular codes of conduct in carrying out their professional responsibilities. According to Rosemary Donegan artists depended upon government subsidized grants which required them to formulate and articulate their working methods and technical processes in accordance with standards established by a jury system of peers and mentors. They followed particular ways of thinking and living which borrowed from critical art discourse (Donegan, “What Ever Happened to Queen Street West?”, 12-13, 15). Similarly the artists at Cameron House brought with them the funding provided by provincial and national art councils which offered grants to cover the costs for the production, exhibition and dissemination of their works (Taylor 6). By participating in exhibitions at the hotel, the artists thus developed networks of support as sustained by gallery institutions and government agencies which provided them with financial and material resources to create and distribute their art. That is to say that they worked within a particular ‘gallery’ framework to produce installations at the Cameron House where creative communities engaged in collaborative processes of exchange.

The artists at Gladstone Hotel also developed their professional careers by getting involved with the events organized on the premises. In managing the building, Christina Zeidler followed the philosophy of urban theorist, Jane Jacob who described “mixed use
neighborhoods” which combined living accommodations with commercial establishments (Hannon 60; Jacobs, Death and Life of Great American Cities, 155-254). Zeidler similarly redesigned the Gladstone Hotel to include residential and recreational facilities such as performance venues and exhibition galleries which she rented out to differing art and cultural organizations. Located in the Arts and Design district the hotel catered to creative communities who established production, exhibition and distribution centres in the surrounding area. Within more recent years corporate developers gentrified this sector of Toronto by constructing condominiums and commercial complexes. These multinational organizations pushed out small scale businesses established by artists and designers who relocated to other sectors of the city.

By contrast Zeidler established connections with local entrepreneurs and contracted furniture stores, interior decorators, textile workers and lighting manufacturers to provide goods and services at the hotel. She facilitated cultural art production and contributed to the creative economy by providing opportunities for artists to display their works. She developed a multi-tiered system for the rental of exhibition and workshop spaces in the hotel. For instance she charged a participation fee for the annual alternative design show, Come Up to My Room which consisted of temporary site specific works displayed throughout the rooms, hallways and lobbies of the building ("Come Up to My Room", n. pag.). The cost for entering the competition varied according to the size of the rooms in which the artists and designers showcased their works. Prices ranged from $150 for a single room to $650 for a public venue and covered the costs of administration, coordination, marketing and publication ("Come Up to My Room", n. pag.). In addition the candidates paid for the materials to create the works and put in time for labour and
production which significantly added onto the costs, thus limiting who could participate
in the exhibition.

By contrast Zeidler provided artists with honorariums and a budget to cover
material and labour costs for completing the Artist Designed Rooms on the upper floors
of the building (Billio 20-22; Mitchell, Personal Interview, 1-2; Zeidler 11). (See
Appendix C1 for list of Artist Designed Rooms at Gladstone Hotel). These rooms
comprised a select number of lodgings in the hotel which clients rented on a short term
basis. Working with project coordinator Suanne McGregor, Zeidler hired artists to
complete the interiors and encouraged collaborative projects between painters, sculptors,
videographers, film makers, woodworkers, ceramicists, textile designers and architects
(Zeidler 12-14). The artists also worked with local retailers and manufacturers who
provided the beds, tables, chairs, carpeting, draperies and light fixtures which formed part
of the hotel décor. Engaging in processes of exchange with neighborhood businesses, the
creative communities developed networks of rapport with art collectives and commercial
entrepreneurs. They not only worked through the differing interests and agendas of these
varying constituencies, but they also negotiated their own changing subject position in the
hotel where they served as both hired employees and paying customers by simultaneously
renovating the facilities and using the services offered by the building manager.

Zeidler and McGregor further ensured that the Artist Designed Rooms provided
tourists with comfortable accommodations during their stay in Toronto. They stressed the
functionality of the space throughout the planning and construction phases of the room
interiors. Whereas Zeidler requested that artists produce temporary site specific
installations for the annual exhibition Come Up to My Room, she instructed participants
to complete the Artist Designed Rooms with longevity in mind.\textsuperscript{23} Despite these initial objectives some of the works have already fallen into a state of disrepair. The deterioration of the art raises questions regarding the preservation and conservation of the room installations. Zeidler and McGregor asked artists to create durable pieces that would remain intact after continued use. In some instances these stipulations required revisions to the original proposals resulting in the re-conceptualization of the artists’ designs. The contracts also required that the artists incorporate furnishings and accessories into the interior décor so that the clients had access to all the necessary amenities (Billio 2-3, 6-7, 11-12, 19, 22; Mitchell, Personal Interview, 1-2, 6-7; Zeidler 11-12, 14-15).

Further Zeidler advertised and marketed the hotel to consumer economies and established the Artist Designed Rooms as exhibition display. In outlining her business mandate on the Gladstone website, Zeidler indicated that “the project [was] constantly pushing the boundaries of commerce, culture and community. The Gladstone [was] engaged in an on-going push/pull between promoting Toronto’s creative community and protecting and preserving the creative community’s place in a neighborhood that [was] becoming increasingly gentrified” ("Unique Hotel Business Vision", n. pag.). Zeidler described the uneasy tension between creative and capitalist economies which simultaneously sustained and disrupted each other by serving seemingly different goals and objectives.

The artists thus occupied a paradoxical position by revitalizing the downtown core. On the one hand, they renovated buildings in the neighborhood, thus attracting

\textsuperscript{23} Further the Gladstone website referred to the works in Come Up to My Room as installations which the artists produced “free from the constraints of commercial considerations” (“Come Up to My Room”, n. pag.). By contrast Zeidler described the Artists Rooms as environment based designs which met the needs of the paying customers, thus locating the works within capitalist market economies (Zeidler 11).
corporate businesses which regulated and managed the properties for commercial and residential development. One the other hand, artists explored alternative art practices which changed the ways in which people inhabited and experienced public urban spaces. By altering the interior and exterior décor of the hotel building, they reformulated mechanisms of display which turned city districts into tourist spectacles. The artists re-conceptualized the architectural site thus altering the viewers’ perceptions and understandings of the surrounding environment. Responding to the overlapping needs of commerce and community, they worked both with and against capitalist markets by creating site specific works which served consumerist purposes while engaging in tactics of resistance which subverted mainstream culture.

In negotiating the business objectives of the hotel owner and the curatorial mandates of the exhibition coordinators, the artists also developed contacts in their professional fields. Christina Zeidler herself was a filmmaker and she built upon the connections she established in the art community by renting out the conference rooms and gallery spaces to film collectives, craft associations and design firms.24 In participating in exhibitions at the hotel, artists networked with their colleagues and associates who attended the other programs organized on the premises. They negotiated what Rosemary Donegan describes as the economic infrastructure surrounding cultural art production. More specifically they extended their personal affiliations in order to develop their careers and gain recognition among their peers and mentors. By establishing contacts with other artists, critics and curators, they accessed the necessary resources required to produce and exhibit their works (Donegan, “What Ever Happened to Queen Street

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24 For further information on the organizations and associations that rented the conference rooms and gallery spaces see the events listings in back issues of the monthly newsletter Gladstone Bag at: <http://www.gladstonehotel.com/newsletter.html>. 
West?”, 12-13, 15, 19-20). For instance during exhibition openings at Gladstone Hotel, they provided curriculum vitae and business cards as well as website addresses to their personal homepages and design firms. They promoted themselves to potential clients and responded to questions and enquiries from visiting audiences. In exhibiting installations at Gladstone Hotel, the artists thus developed marketing strategies in order to sell and distribute their works.

The artists extended their studio practices by exploring new methods of presenting and packaging their art. In discussing his experiences living and working in the building, resident artist Bruno Billio described the various open houses scheduled throughout the year. He considered the ways in which he established his reputation in the art community by participating in the exhibitions (29). More specifically Billio turned his studio space and residence into exhibition display and promoted his design based works to consumer markets. By showing visitors his apartment, he connected processes of art-making with tourist spectacle. He described the intersection of local and national art scenes which included production, exhibition and publication centers (29). Through these means artists circulated their works to growing audiences, thus developing their careers both in museum institutions and commercial establishments.

Christina Zeidler further engaged in various advertising strategies in order to establish the hotel in the tourist industry. In addition to publishing an in-house monthly

25 During my visit to the annual open house in January 2006 and January 2007, the artists distributed and circulated this information to the public. The website for Gladstone Hotel similarly included detailed descriptions of their room designs and provided links to their personal and company homepages (“Artist Designed Accomodations”, n. pag.). For further examples of the kinds of contacts and connections artists established during exhibitions see: "Come Up to My Room,” Gladstone Hotel, 12 Sept. 2007 <http://www.gladstonehotel.com/comeup.html>.
newslette","26 she also put ads in newspapers, magazines and journals and posted information regarding upcoming events and activities on the website for Gladstone Hotel. Zeidler thus circulated photographic reproductions of the building including images of the Artist Designed Rooms through the media. By entering into contractual agreements with Zeidler the artists thus received publicity coverage for their works. They intervened in capitalist markets and disrupted mainstream culture by exploring alternative ways of living and thinking. They developed critical aesthetics in opposition to gallery institutions which classified and assessed works according to hierarchical systems of interpretation. The Artists Designed Rooms thus provided evidence of the paradox underlying practices of art-making. In addition to developing marketing and advertising strategies in order to sell and distribute their works, artists subverted mechanisms of spectacle and display surrounding museum exhibitions. They engaged in underground movements which developed covert tactics of resistance while participating in public events in order to garner media attention.

Working within public urban spaces, artists produced installations by juxtaposing paintings, sculptures, pottery, textile works, furniture and video projections. In her analysis of the Artist Designed Rooms Amy Gogarty suggests that they destabilized existing modes of classification by following multi-disciplinary approaches, thus blurring the distinction between art and design and undermining interpretive frameworks which fixed and stabilized processes of art-making into separate and distinct categories (Gogarty 212-219). Producing works in hybrid sites which combined room accommodations, bars, exhibition galleries, cafés, and performance venues, the artists redesigned the interior

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26 The in-house newsletter Gladstone Bag provided information on programs of activities at the hotel and also featured articles which offered in-depth coverage of the events hosted on the premises.
décor and architectural structure. The installation projects at Gladstone Hotel thus provided evidence of the intersection of cultural art production and capitalist market forces. By participating in the hotel exhibitions the artists simultaneously complied with and disrupted spectacles of display which commoditized contemporary art practices.

In producing installations at Embassy Hotel, Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel artists participated in capitalist and creative economies. They responded to the needs of the owners who expanded their facilities and services in order to attract new clientele. The hotel proprietors benefited from corporate development schemes in the area which brought in business to the surrounding district. Yet they supported art practices which disrupted consumer markets by critiquing mechanisms of displays in gallery institutions. Although the artists destabilized the ideological discourses surrounding museum exhibitions they also created installations in hotel buildings which catered to tourist industries. Further, the owners promoted and advertised the installation exhibitions in the media, thus gaining publicity coverage in the local press. They engaged in creative entrepreneurship by facilitating the production and consumption of art in their commercial establishments.

In the next chapter, I shall extend my analysis of creative and capitalist economies, by considering the ways in which the owners contributed to city revitalization by renovating the buildings. I provide theoretical analysis of discourses on urban renewal by focusing on the classed locations of artists within processes of gentrification which simultaneously enabled and disenabled community formations. I develop my discussions of the historical context surrounding hotel installations by examining the development of arts and heritage districts in city neighborhoods. In evaluating cultural art production in downtown cores, I argue that artists re-envisioned public urban spaces where people
gained a sense of identity, place and belonging. They re-articulated historical material geographies through contemporary art practices by redesigning the architectural décor of the hotels, thus altering the ways in which people perceived and understood their surroundings.
Chapter 3: Heritage Districts and Creative Communities

This chapter examines hotel installations in the context of historical districts in the cities of London and Toronto. I argue that artists occupied architectural sites which served people of differing socio-economic and ethno-cultural backgrounds. They preserved and renovated hotel buildings which took on social, symbolic and historic meaning for local residents and workers. For instance Embassy Hotel and Cameron House were located in older city neighborhoods which dated back to the Eighteenth Century. In more recent years conservation groups designated these city sectors as heritage districts in order to maintain the architecture along the streets. In this, they reinforced preservation standards which defined the function and form of the buildings and thus determined how and why people inhabited the architectural sites.

In examining the installation exhibitions at Embassy Hotel and Cameron House, I suggest that the artists complied with and disrupted heritage conservation schemes by renovating the buildings. They restored architecture with historic value yet they also changed the surrounding environment, thus subverting preservation standards which aimed to retain the original designs of existing buildings. Their installations traversed architectural interiors and exteriors, thus re-mapping urban geographies by repositioning viewers in city spaces. These shifts in visual paradigms undermined socio-spatial practices by enacting a series of dislocations within and across building sites and urban sectors. Creative communities subverted cartographic representations surrounding historic designations which turned neighborhoods into heritage attractions for the benefit of local and visiting tourists.

Heritage restoration in the City of London began when the local government asked Stantec Consultants and Nexus Architects to complete conservation studies of
East London in 2004 and 2006 under the guidance of Michael Baker. The study area included the residential district bordered by Adelaide Street to the West, Quebec Street to the East, Queen Street to the South and Centre and Elias Street to the North (Figure 12). This neighborhood hinges on Dundas Street to the South which historically served as a retail strip where various entrepreneurs established their businesses, including Embassy Hotel. In describing the heritage properties in the area, Baker provides a brief history of East London from the Eighteenth Century to the present day. Originally this sector of the city was a separate municipality which catered to manufacturing industries including railway shops, oil refineries and factories which produced boilers and barrels.

East London experienced an economic boom in the late-Nineteenth Century when it amalgamated with the City of London (Baker, et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Final Report, 7-10). Responding to the demands of local workers and residents, architects constructed industrial, commercial and residential buildings between the 1890s and the 1920s. As the population grew in the area, business people and entrepreneurs opened up groceries, retail stores, bakeries, specialty shops, theatres, restaurants and bars. East London continued to prosper until the early-Twentieth Century and then steadily entered into economic decline as factories and industries closed down. Small scale businesses were unable to keep up with increased competition in expanding capitalist markets which proved detrimental to the local economy (Baker et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Final Report, 10-16). International corporations established manufacturing plants off shore, thus taking away business from regionally based companies in Canada. These shifts in the global economy resulted in the uneven distribution of wealth and power within and across city districts with negative consequences for East London which continued to experience an economic downturn.

In examining the historic architecture in the area, Baker focuses on the residential homes built from the late-Nineteenth to the early-Twentieth Century. The buildings provided evidence of differing architectural styles most prominent among which included the Queen Anne and Ontario Cottage (Baker et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Final Report, 30-33). In outlining the objectives and aims

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1 The Queen Anne style developed in Britain during the 1860s and resulted in a revival of English Tudor architecture. The buildings were characterized by decorative facades, geometric trim design, pitched roofs and ornamental spindle work (Mikel 90-100; Baker et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Final Report, 30). The Ontario cottage style developed in Ontario from 1830 to 1870 and was typically...
of heritage designation, Baker describes the restoration of the building facades. He stresses the importance of retaining the original architectural designs and retrofitting the decorative ornaments in order to maintain the historical authenticity of the heritage buildings.

These conservation standards, however, did not apply to the back and interior of the houses which came under the care of individual owners. They followed their own guidelines in renovating these parts of their homes while retaining a consistent architectural décor and design throughout (Baker et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Conservation Plan, 4.1-4.6, 7.1-7.4). Although Baker narrows his study to residential buildings, he also suggests that these criteria applied to the commercial architecture situated on Dundas Street East. This sector is located outside the proposed heritage district, yet it lies in such close proximity that the business entrepreneurs benefited from the architectural renovations in the area (Baker, Michael, et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Final Report, 2, 76).

Located in East London, Embassy Hotel provided evidence of historical architecture as described within conservation policies. Constructed in the early 1900s, the building served as an example of the Art Deco style (Figure 13).² Beige and red brick cladding covered the front façade which was symmetrical in design. There were a series of pedimented windows spaced at regular intervals on the upper story of the building. The interior included four interconnected spaces on the ground floor which

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2 Art Deco Style developed from 1910 to 1939 in Europe, the United States, Latin America, Asia and Africa. Architects created geometric building designs and decorated the exterior façades with trapezoidal, zigzagged and chevron patterns. They incorporated modern, technological materials into the architecture including stainless steel, aluminum, glass veneer and masonry sheathing (Benton, “Art Deco Architecture”, 100-111.; Benton, “The Style and the Age”, 12-27).
served as a lounge, bar, restaurant and dining hall. The second floor housed room accommodations and administrative offices which people accessed through a sequence of adjoining hallways.


When Helen and Egon Haller purchased Embassy Hotel in the early 1970s, they changed the interior and exterior of the building. Although they renovated the architecture, they did not intend to retain the original design but rather altered the décor in order to bring in new customers. With the assistance of artist Ron Benner, the Hallers refurbished the restaurant on the first floor of the building and converted the west wing
into the Sunnyside Lounge. They built performance venues into the newly redesigned interior and updated the lighting system. On the second floor they removed the walls which the previous owners installed in order to divide up the rooms and uncovered doorways which were buried beneath the reconstructed interiors. They also completed repairs in the living accommodations and painted the walls and ceilings to cover up the grime and dirt on the plaster surface (Benner, Interview with Crandall, et al. 13-14, 23-24; Haller, 1-2, 9-10).

In restoring and redesigning the interior décor, the Hallers both perpetuated and disrupted conservation schemes which preserved historical architecture. The hotel renovations contrasted with the retrofitted façades described within heritage policies which reinforced prohibitive building standards. Thus the owners of Embassy Hotel re-envisioned public city space by changing the function and significance of the building. They responded to the needs of local residents and workers by expanding the hotel facilities and services to include performance venues, an art gallery, a restaurant and room rentals. They contributed to the rehabilitation of the surrounding streetscape and altered the ways in which people inhabited the neighborhood of East London without explicitly following heritage policy recommendations.

Cameron House is similarly located in the historic district of Queen Street West which took on particular meanings within the context of heritage conservation schemes in Toronto. In 2006 the local government asked the Office of Urbanism to complete a study entitled Queen Street West: Heritage Conservation District Plan. The study area included Queen Street West from University Avenue to Bathurst Street which is a mixed commercial residential sector (Figure 14). In describing this city district, the report writers examine the shifts in urban development by focusing on survey maps of
Toronto produced from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century. The grid systems of streets and avenues demarcated differing neighborhood sectors which changed in function and design as city planners and architects constructed buildings and roads. Queen Street prospered during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century when entrepreneurs – such as grocers, druggists, confectioners, tailors, dressmakers, milliners and blacksmiths – moved into the area (Queen Street West, 17-25).

Figure 14. Map showing Queen Street West with Cameron House (labeled number 1), Toronto, Ontario. Mapquest. 28 March 2008 <http://www.mapquest.com/>.

On the corner of Queen Street and Spadina Avenue, there were a significant number of factories which catered to the garment industries. Consequently local workers and inhabitants referred to this sector of the city as the fashion and design
district. During the late-Twentieth Century artists moved into the neighborhood where they rented live/work spaces for cheap rates. They revitalized the downtown core, thus attracting corporate businesses that purchased properties in the surrounding district. Capitalist reinvestments in urban development resulted in increased property values in this city sector. As low income earners, artists could no longer afford to live in the neighborhood and thus moved further west on Queen Street (Donegan, “What Ever Happened to Queen Street West?”, 13-14, 20-22; Queen Street West, 27).

This area of the city is a cultural district which includes retail stores, galleries, restaurants, clubs and bars. The report, Queen Street West (2006) describes the wide open sidewalks which enabled the circulation of pedestrian traffic and contributed to the vibrant street life (Queen Street West, 3-11). They discuss the historic buildings on Queen Street which architects constructed between the late-Nineteenth and early-Twentieth Century. The heritage properties provided evidence of differing architectural styles most prominent among which include the Italianate and Second Empire.3

In outlining the conservation standards, the report writers focus on the facades of the buildings which formed a continuous series of store fronts with doors and windows facing outward onto the sidewalk. Like the East London study, the Queen Street West plan does not offer guidelines for the design of the back façades and the interior architecture which the property owners renovated according to their own personal standards. By contrast the restoration and renovations of the front exteriors had

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3 The Italianate style developed in nineteenth-century Britain and resulted in a revival of Renaissance Italian architecture. These buildings were characterized by symmetrical façades, projecting cornices, arched windows and attached columns (Mikel 64-73; Queen Street West, 30). The Edwardian style developed in early-twentieth-century Britain and incorporated classical architectural features such as columns, entablatures and arches. These buildings were characterized by mansard roofs, segmented voussoirs, elaborately framed windows and molded stringcourses (Fellows n. pag.; Mikel 110-117; Queen Street West, 30).
to comply with the building regulations established by the City of Toronto heritage department. These regulations placed restrictions upon the height and width of the architectural façades as well as its relationship to the surrounding streetscape (Queen Street West, 57-79).

In identifying heritage buildings on Queen Street West, the policy analysts describe Cameron House which was constructed in the late-Nineteenth Century in the Italianate style (Queen Street West, 30) (Figure 15 and 16). Red brick cladding covered the façade which was symmetrical in design. There were a series of bays along the front and side of the building separated by pilasters spaced at differing intervals. Arched windows with pedimented surrounds decorated the upper stories of the building. The interior included two interconnected spaces on the ground floor which served as a bar and performance venue. The upper floors housed room rentals which were joined together through a sequence of intersecting hallways and stairwells.

After taking over the premises in the early 1980s, Paul Sanella and Herb Tookey renovated the building with the assistance of resident artist Napoleon Brousseau. More specifically they altered the hotel façade thus not complying with heritage conservation schemes which focused on retaining the original architectural designs. They painted the building exterior and changed the colors periodically in order to update the hotel décor. Brousseau further altered the brick cladding decorating the front façade by covering the bottom half of the outside wall with corrugated steel. He plastered cement on the entranceway and created a textured effect by stamping out the surface with animal horns and jawbones (Brousseau 5-6; Sanella 17-18).
In addition the owners reconstructed the architectural interior and renovated the bar on the ground floor. They took down the ceiling tiles from the front room and uncovered the original nineteenth-century decorative moldings. They added a stage into the back room and updated the lighting system (Brousseau 12-13, 20-21; Sanella 18-19). Shortly before the proprietors purchased the building, there was a fire on the second floor and they repaired the damage to the rooms in order to make them inhabitable for the tenants. They ripped up the linoleum tiles from the floors to reveal
the hard wood slating beneath and tore down some of the walls between the rooms thus opening up the spaces to offer larger accommodations (Brousseau 3-4: Sanella 11-12).

Figure 16. Side façade of Cameron House, Toronto, Ontario. Photograph by Peter MacCallum. 1987. Peter MacCallum Personal Collection, Toronto.

By refurbishing and redesigning the buildings, the owners of Cameron House and Embassy Hotel rehabilitated the surrounding architecture. Their business mandates contrasted with and complemented the goals and objectives of recent heritage groups thus revealing the contradictions and tensions underlying conservation schemes which both supported and disrupted capitalist development projects. For instance the heritage studies for East London and Queen Street West describe zoning by-laws which protected historic sites from demolition and prevented corporate organizations from constructing large scale buildings in the area. City inspectors required the property
owners to apply for building permits which outlined the procedures that the contractors
had to follow in restoring the interior and exterior décor.

The reports further provide guidelines for architectural features such as
windows, doors, cornices, porches, gables, roofing and cladding (Queen Street West,
157-79; Baker et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Conservation Plan,
4.1-4.6, 7.1-7.4). In outlining these building regulations, the studies focus on Euro-
American architectural styles and describe the history of Anglo-European settlers who
moved into the city sectors from the Eighteenth Century onward. Although the writers
describe the neighborhoods as culturally diverse, they do not discuss the differing
ethno-cultural and socio-economic communities who inhabited the urban districts.
Rather they discuss the history of Anglo-European settlement in the cities, thus
reinforcing exclusionist systems of power and knowledge. The policy analysts indicate
that the British gentry developed urban centers by establishing residential, commercial
and industrial corridors where they regulated the social, political and economic
production of space. In examining heritage properties in these areas, they inscribe
architectural narratives by mapping out the surrounding neighborhood within colonialist
discourses.

Further the reports present East London and Queen Street West as historical
districts in capitalist market economies. The conservation and preservation of the
architecture served as a means to brand and market the neighborhoods as heritage
attractions for local and visiting tourists. The emphasis on the architectural facades and
the surrounding streetscapes further drew attention to aspects of the buildings and
sidewalks that were on public view. The writers thus establish these city sectors as
tourist destinations and describe marketing strategies such as street signage, walking guides and information centres which directed consumer audiences to the heritage sites.

These architectural conservation studies connect to policies on creative cities developed by the municipalities of London and Toronto. The documents include the City of London Creative City Task Force Report (2004) and City of Toronto Culture Plan for the Creative City (2003). Both of the reports borrow from Richard Florida’s writing on creative cities which describes the economic benefits of cultural industries in urban centres. Florida argues that cities rich in cultural amenities attracted the creative class which included highly educated, upwardly mobile professionals (Florida, The Rise of the Creative Class, 1-21). The reports on creative cities produced by the municipalities of London and Toronto similarly focus on the development of art and culture in capitalist markets. The writers assess the economic value of creative industries which contributed towards increased expenditures and revenues in the local region (City of Toronto Culture Division 11, 36-42; Hume 7-10, 29-33).

Pierre Bourdieu discusses concepts of cultural capital in his analysis of art, music, film and theatre. He argues that the bourgeoisie class reinforced elitist notions of taste which acted as markers of social distinction. They separated ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture and imposed rules of decorum which determined the ways in which people behaved in different social contexts (Bourdieu 19-50, 56-84). Bourdieu develops theories on habitus which describes both the spaces where people lived and socialized as well as the codes of conduct that they ascribed to in occupying these sites. The bourgeoisie class met in recreational clubs where they regulated and monitored their

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4 For more detailed analysis of cultural policies in Toronto see Chapter 4.
dress, speech and bodily movements in accordance with accepted etiquette which established their social status among friends and colleagues (Bourdieu 169-225).

It is precisely this concept of cultural capital which policy analysts perpetuate by establishing Toronto and London as creative cities. They demarcate arts and heritage sectors which included museums, galleries, performance art centres and concert halls where visitors attended events in order to cultivate aesthetic tastes and values (City of Toronto Culture Division 5-13, 22-30, 33-36; Hume 7-10, 29-33, 39-50). Within this urban context, processes of gentrification intersected cultural production and consumption which served as means of signifying social status and class distinction. The revitalization of the downtown core resulted in the development of residential, cultural and retail districts that catered to the middle class who ascribed to particular lifestyles by visiting the recreational centres and shopping venues located in these sectors of the city. They participated in leisure activities and established themselves as the cultural elite by purchasing consumer goods and services and investing in tourist markets which drove creative industries in urban centres.

Policy analysts perpetuate these class hierarchies by describing the production of cultural capital within and across city regions. The reports on creative cities further connect to conservation studies on East London and Queen Street West which similarly describe the economic benefits of historic districts. The writers impose preservation standards which regulated the buildings and the surrounding streetscape according to exclusionist urban design schemes. That is to say that they proscribe and prescribe the architectural styles which property managers adhered to in renovating their houses and
business establishments. These styles borrowed from European architectural traditions and carried through the design and layout of previous building structures. 5

Within this urban context property ownership served as a means of reinforcing existing aesthetic criteria and validating elitist concepts of taste. The policy analysts prohibit building projects that did not fit within Eurocentric notions of urban planning and describe renovation schemes that followed narrowly defined architectural conventions. Further they discuss the settlement of British immigrants in these city sectors which formed part of the Canadian colonies (Baker et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Final Report, 6-16; Queen Street West, 21-28). In marketing and branding the neighborhood districts, the writers inscribe narratives of ‘place’ within regional and nationalist discourses which legitimized Anglo-European histories. The reports reinforce existing structures of power and knowledge in capitalist markets by focusing on urban development projects which resulted from colonialist expansion.

The legislation of architectural conservation within municipal reports provides a framework for analyzing the installations at Embassy Hotel and Cameron House. In re-examining the hotel exhibitions through contemporary heritage policies, I explore the multiple and contradictory meanings of site specific practices within the context of urban renewal schemes. Artists worked in hotels which formed one of many historic

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5 For instance the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation Study indicates that the majority of the buildings along the street conformed to the Italianate and Second Empire style both of which developed in Britain and spread to North America (Queen Street West, 35, 40-41). The East London Heritage Conservation Study proposes that a significant number of the buildings in this sector of the city followed the Queen Anne style which also developed in Britain and spread to North America. In addition many of the houses in East London provided examples of the Ontario Cottage style (Baker et al. Old East Heritage Conservation District Study: Final Report, 30-33). Both of these conservation studies situate the buildings within European and Canadian architectural traditions and exclude residential and commercial establishments that did not follow these artistic canons.
buildings in the surrounding neighborhood. By exhibiting installations on the premises, creative communities altered the building décor and rehabilitated the architectural site.

Thus the artists took up a paradoxical position within the context of urban development by re-envisioning public city spaces. They changed where and how they produced, exhibited and displayed art in capitalist economies and questioned who benefited from the distribution and circulation of cultural resources. They redesigned the hotel rooms which served local and visiting tourists and responded to the needs of the owners who provided goods and services in consumer markets. These artists critiqued government policies which focused on the economic impacts of cultural production and consumption in the local region and developed interventionist strategies by exploring the social, political and economic conditions surrounding gentrification. They produced site specific works in tourist districts and heritage sectors, thus changing the ways in which people accessed, experienced and perceived city neighborhoods.

*Spring Hurlbut’s Architectural Reinventions*

Artist Spring Hurlbut developed critical aesthetics by producing her installation for Embassy Hotel. She commemorated the history of the building which was a family owned and operated business located in a working class industrial district. Alex Hassan originally owned the hotel and eventually his daughter, Helen Haller took over the premises. Haller built upon the connections her father established with the local community which comprised tenants of differing ethno-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (Haller, 1, 9-10; Malone, 40). In creating her permanent installation for Embassy Hotel, Spring Hurlbut dedicated the piece to Alex Hassan (Figure 17 and 18). She installed her work in the Beaver Bar on the first floor of the building. The piece included a tree trunk which extended from floor to ceiling and functioned as an
architectural device in the room. The work resembled a column with a carved wooden base and capital on the top and bottom of the structure. I chose to focus on this work because it served as an example of an artistic intervention into the surrounding building space.

More specifically, Hurlbut referenced the decorative ornamentation found on classical architecture produced during Antiquity. According to art historian, George Hersey buildings constructed during this period served as religious temples. They included columns and pediments which took their form and function from sacred groves of trees where people worshipped the gods. Hurlbut referenced the natural origins of

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6 Hurlbut’s sculpture at Embassy Hotel related to other works that she produced during the mid to late 1980s. For example she created a tree column for the group exhibition Paradise Then and Now at the Toronto Sculpture garden in 1986. In addition she completed plaster columns for her solo exhibitions at the Toronto galleries, YYY in 1986 and Mercer Union in 1985 (Dewdney, “Gestural Colonies”, 5-17, 5-8; Wolff 33).
classical architecture by incorporating a tree into her sculpture at Embassy Cultural House. She drew attention to what was missing or absent from the hotel site which formed part of urban development schemes in the downtown core. These rebuilding projects resulted in the destruction of ecosystems which vanished and disappeared from the cityscapes as people constructed roads and buildings in order to facilitate urban expansion. By re-inserting the tree in the interior of the hotel, Hurlbut reminded the viewers of what had once existed on the site but which only remained as an archaeological trace or remnant.

In examining her works, I suggest that Hurlbut disrupted heritage policies which preserved and restored historic architecture. She critically re-interpreted building traditions by exploring processes of memory making which brought into focus forgotten or lost cultural narratives. Whereas conservationist groups authenticated notions of ‘place’ by describing heritage sites that retained and maintained pre-established building styles, Hurlbut re-invented architectural ornamentations by incorporating various symbolic references into her sculptures. She retraced the genealogy of contemporary building practices and explored personal and collective narratives of ‘place’ by creating a memorial in honor of Alex Hassan.

The accompanying label for the piece referenced the English and Arabic spellings of his name, Alex Hassan and Assaf Hussein. Unlike traditional columns which served as structural supports by holding up the roofs of buildings, Hurlbut’s sculpture did not function as a load bearing device. Instead the work took on commemorative meaning and thus recalled the triumphal columns from Roman Antiquity (Eastabrook 3). These earlier sculptures included carvings which depicted scenes of imperialist and colonialist conquests, thus reinforcing hegemonic discourses.
By contrast Hurlbut explored the genealogy of the hotel building which passed from father to daughter thus remaining a family owned and operated business. Further she referenced their Lebanese background through the inclusion of the Arabic name Assaf Hussein and thus memorialized the personal and familial histories of the owners and patrons. Her installation functioned as a counter-monument and contrasted with the buildings in the surrounding neighborhood. Whereas conservation policies focused on heritage sites which provided evidence of Anglo-European history in the local region, Hurlbut’s column offered more complex readings of the surrounding architecture by exploring various systems of representation which took on different levels of meaning in the hotel.

The sculpture formed part of a series of exhibitions entitled Four Installations organized by local curator Debrann Eastabrook from September 1987 to February 1988. Eastabrook invited four artists from London, Toronto and Halifax to produce temporary and permanent installations at various locations throughout the building. The artists included David Merritt, Robert McNealy, Spring Hurlbut and Michael Fernandes. In addition to creating site specific art in different rooms, the artists participated in an accompanying exhibition in the gallery on the first floor of the hotel. The shows rotated every two months and included small scale works which connected to the permanent installations displayed in the bars, hallways and room rentals (Eastabrook 3).

The interpretive material surrounding the exhibitions comprised a series of essays and articles completed for the Embassy Cultural House Tabloid. The edition for Spring 1988 included photographs of the temporary and permanent installations.

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7 The Embassy Cultural House collective published the tabloid on a regular basis from 1983 to 1990 (Benner, Interview with Crandall, et. al. 12, 19; Haller 2-3; Hassan, Personal Interview, 10).
completed by the artists participating in the exhibition series, *Four Installations* (1987-1988). In her essay “A State of Transference”, Debrann Eastabrook describes the subject matter and thematic content of the works. She discusses concepts of site specificity and suggests that artists explored the social, political and cultural context in which they produced their installations. She examines the architectural site of Embassy Hotel where the artists interacted with the residents and patrons throughout the different stages of planning, producing and exhibiting their works (3).

The title of her article borrows from Michael Fernandes’ installation in Room 41 on the second floor of the hotel. Fernandes produced a written text on the closet wall which described differing states of sleep and wakefulness. In addition he completed a line engraving on one of the walls of the room which showed a jug pouring liquid into a cup. The accompanying exhibition in Embassy Cultural House gallery on the first floor of the building similarly explored themes of reality and illusion. The gallery formed part of the hotel restaurant and Fernandes relocated the chairs and tables from the front to the back of the room where the exhibition space was located. He produced placemats that included text, once again, describing the shift between fiction and reality thus establishing a connection to the installation located on the second floor of the hotel (Eastabrook 3).

According to Eastabrook, Fernandes altered the viewers’ understandings of the surrounding space by describing the personal and subjective narratives which gave meaning to the hotel site. Eastabrook’s concept of site specificity frames her discussion of Spring Hurlbut’s installation which functioned as an architectural device in the building interior. Hurlbut displayed her work in the Beaver Bar of the hotel and situated the piece off to the side of the entranceway which led out onto the front lobby. The
owners demarcated this section of the building by painting a black stencil image of a beaver on the glass panel of the entrance door. In placing the work in this location, Hurlbut played with the symbol of the beaver which serves as an icon of the Canadian wilderness. Beavers thrive in forests where they make their habitats along rivers and streams by collecting and stacking tree trunks and branches. This reference to nature took on different layers of meaning in the interior space of the hotel which functioned as a public urban site in the city of London. The installation signified the shift between inside and outside, nature and city, public and private by drawing attention to landscape elements which existed on the exterior of the building.8

Hurlbut originally installed her tree column in the Toronto Sculpture Garden as part of an exhibition, Paradise Then and Now (1986) which included works by Spring Hurlbut, Robin Collyer and Robert Wiens. According to Carole Corbeil the artists critically reflected upon concepts of Utopia which took on particular significance within modernist discourses. She argues “that control and subjugation of nature, human or otherwise, [lay] behind notions of Utopia, and that ‘progress’ [was] an ideological construction that justifie[d] such control” (C3). In producing sculptures for the exhibition the artists disrupted hegemonic discourses by creating works which “blend[ed] in [with], and illuminat[ed] the immediate environment as opposed to dominating it” (Corbeil C3).

Spring Hurlbut completed three tree columns for the exhibition and placed them in different locations throughout the garden, thus incorporating them into the surrounding landscape. Her sculptures referenced Greco-Roman architecture which

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8 The column took on added meaning in the city of London which people referred to as the Forest City due to the proliferation of trees in the area.
typically included temples with an interior sanctuary surrounded by a row of columns and a pedestal roof over top. More specifically Hurlbut drew inspiration from the Renaissance architect Donato Bramante who completed the Column of Loggia in the courtyard of the Basilica of San Ambrogio, Milan (Hurlbut, “Three Tree Columns”, 18; Hurlbut, Personal Interview, 5). Bramante studied classical architecture produced in Ancient Greece and borrowed from the building style developed during this time period (Hartt and Wilkins 495-502).

Bramante carved the marble surface of his sculpture to resemble the texture of a tree trunk thus embellishing upon the fluting which usually decorated the shaft of the column. Hurlbut took this one step further by incorporating actual trees into her works and situating the pieces outside for the exhibition, Paradise Then and Now (1986). She then relocated one of the tree columns from an outdoor to an indoor setting for the exhibition, Four Installations (1987-1988). Whereas the sculpture blended into the garden setting for the earlier exhibition, the piece appeared incongruous in the bar interior. The overhead floodlight shone down upon the column further making it stand out against the surrounding area.

This juxtaposition of nature and artifice provided evidence of the cultivation of eco-spheres in urban centers where people decorated their homes with scenic views of landscape settings. The Beaver Bar combined together wood paneling, textured wallpaper and carpeting which imitated the earthy colors of bark, stone and soil. The interior décor replicated the natural landscape, thus signifying the manufacture and reproduction of eco-spheres through ornamental devices. I posit that Hurlbut examined the ways in which nature became codified through a series of signs or symbols as
evident in the image of the beaver on the door which marked the entranceway into the room.

In addition to installing the sculpture in the Beaver Bar, she also displayed a series of smaller tree trunks in Embassy Cultural House gallery (Figure 19). The gallery and bar were right beside each other and people could access the two spaces through the doorways at the front and back of the rooms. Situated in different locations in the hotel, her sculptures changed in form and function depending on where she placed them in the building. For example she used traditional methods of display in installing the smaller pieces in the gallery, thus establishing them as art objects for sale and purchase. Like the larger column, Hurlbut placed carved wooden bases and capitals on the top and bottoms of the trunks. The trees ranged in size from 1.5 to 3.5 feet and she displayed them on shelving units attached to the wall. She arranged the sculptures from biggest to smallest so that they progressively diminished in size as they receded in space with the tallest at the front of the gallery and the shortest at the back of the room (Eastabrook 3).

This arrangement resembled classical architectural orders by replicating the systems of proportion established during Antiquity. For instance architects designed the temples on the Acropolis by following established guidelines which described the measurements of building structures. They made the shafts of columns slightly wider in the middle and they ordered them so that they diminished in height as they reached the outer edges of the loggia. They adjusted the architectural structures in order to compensate for the shift in visual perception that occurred when people stood from the buildings at a distance and looked up the hill. When audiences viewed the buildings from this vantage point they got a distorted image of the columns which not only appeared to narrow toward the top of the structure, but they also looked like they leaned
in from the side toward the centre. By modifying the width and height of the columns, the architects corrected this optical illusion (Lawrence and Tomlinson 106-124).

They further replicated human bodily proportions in calculating the measurements of the architectural orders. During Antiquity the Roman architect Vitruvius produced treatises which carried through these building conventions. He distinguished between the masculine Doric column and the feminine Ionic column. He reinforced gendered language by describing the stout and planar features of the Doric column which represented male strength. By contrast he defined the Ionic column
according to its elaborate ornamentation which signified feminine excess (103-104).

Cynthia Hammond argues that architects developed Vitruvius’ theories during the Renaissance as evident in Leon Battista Alberti’s book, *On the Art of Building* (1452). Alberti equated classical architecture with humanism which established man as the measure of all things by emphasizing the accomplishments of male leaders. Architects constructed churches and palaces for the ruling aristocracy who reinforced hierarchical structures of power by conquering countries which threatened the nation state. The buildings thus signified patriarchal domination and symbolized imperialist systems of governance (Hammond, “The Strength and Fragility of the Egg”, 16-24).

Hammond suggests that Hurlbut provided a feminist reinterpretation of classical, humanist architecture. Whereas Vitruvius reinforced gendered stereotypes by objectifying the feminine ‘other’, Hurlbut disrupted cultural taboos by exploring female bodily processes which provided evidence of generative cycles. Her works thus served as counter-narratives to architectural discourses which reinforced hegemonic ideologies by supporting colonialist expansion. These treatises perpetuated patriarchal structures of power by describing the punitive female body which nation states sacrificed during wars and religious ceremonies (Hammond, “The Strength and Fragility of the Egg”, 26-35).

During the 1980s and 1990s Spring Hurlbut created architectural sculptures including entablatures, capitals, posts and lintels which incorporated glass eyes, birds’ feet, animal bones, and plaster casts of tongues. George Hershey suggests that Greco-Roman architecture served as the site of sacrificial rituals in which priests slaughtered animals in order to worship the gods. People regarded these rituals as taboo because they were both sacred and forbidden. Hershey indicates that these religious practices
carried through from preceding generations when priests offered human beings as sacrifices. In performing the rituals they thus transgressed cultural taboos by taking another person’s life into their own hands.

Hershey argues that the ornamentation on Greco-Roman architecture represented these rituals as evident in the terminology used to describe the decorative features. Architects referred to the patterns on the entablature as dentils (teeth), astragal (bone joint) and guttae (entrails). Hurlbut retained these references in her architectural sculpture which represented the bodily parts offered up for sacrifice during ritual ceremonies. Further she explored themes of female fertility by decorating her works with rows of eggs which she buried in between birds’ feet. The protective gesture of the claws encircling the eggs suggested the different stages of nesting and hatching.

Hurlbut further produced plaster casts of the Ionic column which Vitruvius associated with femininity. She painted her sculptures with blood red paint and replaced the curved volutes with hair and animal horns. She titled her work Artemis (1990) in reference to the goddess of the hunt who had the power to both destroy and heal people. In his book Metamorphoses (8 CE), Ovid associated Artemis with the moon which circled around the earth at regular intervals throughout the year. Traditional folklore suggested that women’s monthly cycles followed the time marked out on the lunar calendar. According to Cynthia Hammond Hurlbut’s works symbolize taboo bodily processes associated with femininity such as gestation and menstruation. Her sculptures thus established the female body as a site of productive agency and referenced ritual practices which evoked differing physical, emotional and sensorial states (Hammond, “The Strength and Fragility of the Egg”, 26-35).
This return to the body repositioned the viewer in the surrounding space by remapping the architectural structure in relation to internal and external sense perceptions. Hurlbut placed the inner organs on display for visiting audiences and represented sacrificial acts which resulted in the evisceration of human and animal entrails. She enacted what Cynthia Hammond refers to as a “parallactic shift” by resituating the onlooker in relation to the interior décor which was replete with metaphoric references to the absented or invisible body (Hammond, “The Industry of Motherhood”, 54). Hurlbut reminded the viewer of their embodied presence in the building site where she displayed her works.

Her tree columns at Embassy Hotel carried through these connotative and denotative meanings by replicating architectural orders which found their origins in natural and human forms. The abstract planar capital and base of her sculptures recalled the Doric column which Vitruvius associated with masculinity. She disrupted patriarchal systems of control by incorporating organic materials into her works which provided evidence of generative and degenerative processes. The gnarled and twisted trees curved off in different directions, and bulbous knots sprouted out from the shaft of the columns. In addition skeletal branches extended from the top of the trees and long, veiny roots tangled around the outer circumference of the trunks (Figure 20). Each tree was a different species as evident from the barks which changed from smooth, reflective surfaces to cracked, dull textures marred by crevices and fissures which gouged the bark’s outer skin.
In producing the sculptures, Hurlbut selected fallen trees that were rotted and decaying thus establishing a connection with vanitas images which similarly showed putrid fruits and vegetables. These quasi religious paintings depicted withering flowers and leaves which represented the passage from life to death, thus reminding the viewer of their own mortality. Greco-Roman architectural ornamentation similarly referenced religious rituals which people performed in order to appease the gods. The decorations
represented the bodily remains that functioned as votive offerings within religious practices and signified cultural taboos that were both sacred and forbidden.

Hurlbut’s columns thus took on different levels of meaning as art objects which existed both as real tree trunks and symbols of nature. During Antiquity artists represented nature through a series of decorative motifs which adorned the interior and exterior of building structures. Hurlbut simultaneously reproduced and subverted architectural orders by substituting the ornamental device with the material object that it replicated. By incorporating actual tree trunks into her sculptures, she blurred the boundaries between nature/culture and inside/outside. She further exhibited the columns as sculptures, thus removing them from their function as architectural structures which held up the roofs of buildings. Hurlbut presented them as decorative elements with their own implicit systems of signification which borrowed from, but did not replicate, symbolic iconology in Greco-Roman architecture.

Her works re-codified the surrounding space by referencing sacrificial practices which established the body as a site of cultural taboo. Hurlbut explored shifts in internal and external perceptions and altered the viewers’ understanding of the surrounding gallery space. She explored what Cynthia Hammond refers to as ‘political poetics’ (Hammond, “The Industry of Motherhood”, 49) by juxtaposing metaphoric references which took on different levels of meaning including: historical commemoration of the hotel patronage; environmental activism in the urban downtown core; architectural reinvention of humanist classical discourse; and feminist reinterpretation of bodily and corporeal processes. By uncovering the natural and human origins of architecture, Hurlbut rearticulated narratives of ‘place’ and changed the ways in which people inhabited the surrounding environment.
Whereas traditional monuments framed public urban sites by eulogizing people and events from the past, Hurlbut re-historicized the space by exploring the dialectic play of inside/outside, nature/culture and self/other. Her sculpture functioned as an anti-monument and commemorated the previous owner Alex Hassan who was the father of the hotel proprietor Helen Haller. The plaque accompanying the piece included written inscriptions which identified both his English and Arabic name and referenced the family’s Lebanese heritage. Hurlbut examined processes of memory making which intersected collective and personal histories and explored genealogies of ‘place’ which extended across cultures. She changed the social, historical and symbolic significance of the hotel building, thus conceptually re-mapping the surrounding cityscape where residents and workers lived, worked and socialized.

**Sybil Goldstein’s Illusionistic Murals**

Sybil Goldstein’s ceiling mural at Cameron House similarly referenced the architectural site on a symbolic and historical level (Figure 21). She displayed the piece in the bar on the ground floor of the building shortly after Paul Sanella and Herb Tookey completed restorations in the room in 1983. They altered the interior by removing the existing ceiling panels to reveal the original architectural ornamentations underneath. They discovered three square gilt moldings on the ceiling carved with arabesque and curlicue designs characteristic of neo-romantic décor (Sanella, Personal Interview, 17-18). In order to enhance the building restorations, Goldstein installed painted murals in the gilded frames. She depicted a bacchanal scene which showed people celebrating festivities in drunken revelry, thus referencing what happened in the bar where people got together over drinks.
I chose to focus on Goldstein’s installation because it functioned as a counter-narrative to heritage conservation policies. By producing the installation in the hotel, she changed the significance and function of the site, thus altering the ways in which people accessed the building. Goldstein’s work took on several meanings within the context of architectural conservation schemes. She not only created art in an urban neighborhood where local activists restored and conserved buildings with heritage value, but she also developed critical aesthetics by disrupting consumer markets which turned historic neighborhoods into tourist display. Goldstein’s objectives were antithetical to the intentions of conservationist groups who purchased properties in order to gain social status and distinction (Caulfield, City Form and Everyday Life, 82-87). Whereas community activists implemented neighborhood improvement plans
which inflated the real estate market, she re-envisioned public city space by changing the structure and design of the hotel building.

Although Goldstein contributed to the architectural renovations, she also altered the interior decor by referencing Rococo painting traditions developed by artists Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770)\(^9\) and François Boucher (1703-1770)\(^{10}\) who similarly produced ceiling murals (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 4-6, 26-27). Both artists incorporated their work directly into the surrounding architecture and painted scenic views which appeared to extend from the pictorial image out into the building space. They depicted open expanses of sky and created the illusion of light filled passageways which led out onto the exterior world.

In producing the mural at Cameron House, Goldstein disrupted cartographic representations of space as described within recent heritage conservation policies. In establishing the boundaries of cultural districts, the report writers mapped out city sectors according to a grid system of streets and avenues and demarcated historic districts in the urban downtown core (Queen Street West, 21-37). By contrast Goldstein’s works functioned as artistic interventions into the hotel site by depicting staged scenarios which combined art/architecture, inside/outside and reality/illusion. She thus re-invented narratives of ‘place’ by redesigning the interior décor and

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9 Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770) was an eighteenth-century Italian artist who produced oil paintings and frescos for villas and palaces in Italy, Germany, Austria and Spain. He depicted mythological and religious scenes which he painted directly on the walls and ceilings of the buildings. Tiepolo developed techniques of illusionism by incorporating figures into the architectural frames surrounding the pictorial compositions. He created images that blurred the boundaries between the actual building interiors and the painted narrative scenes (Pedrocco n. pag.).

10 François Boucher (1703-1770) was an eighteenth-century French artist who produced mythological and pastoral paintings. He depicted nude figures in idyllic landscape settings with blooming trees and flower gardens. He completed commissions for the French aristocracy who displayed his paintings in their palaces and residences. In addition he created tapestries for domestic interiors as well as set designs which served as scenic backdrops for theatrical performances (Hedley n. pag.).
changing the ways in which the hotel customers and patrons inhabited the surrounding environment.

In completing the ceiling mural, Goldstein depicted a scene from Greek mythology focusing on the story of Bacchus and Ariadne. Ovid described the narrative in his book *Metamorphoses* (8 CE) which recounted the tale of Ariadne, daughter of the King of Minos who fell in love with the Athenian hero Theseus. They escaped from the pit of Minotaurs and ran away to the Isle of Naxos where she entered into a deep sleep after Theseus abandoned her. Bacchus, the God of wine encountered Ariadne during his travels, awoke her from her slumber and subsequently asked her to marry him. During the wedding ceremony he threw up her crown of garlands into the sky which transformed into the constellation Corona. Goldstein depicted Bacchus and Ariadne as they drove through the sky on a horse drawn chariot during the nuptial celebrations (Ovid, 8: 173-182) (Figure 22).

In the Seventeenth Century artists popularized this subject matter by producing paintings which depicted the love scene. They focused on the moment when Bacchus discovered Ariadne on the Isle of Naxos and presented her in various stages of undress, thus objectifying the female body for the pleasures of the predominantly male patrons who commissioned the works. For instance Tiepolo’s *Bacchus and Ariadne* (1743/45) showed the god looming over Ariadne who was nude from the waist up with her breasts exposed to the viewing audience.\(^\text{11}\) Goldstein disrupted the male voyeuristic gaze by depicting the wedding ceremonies when the couple joined together in matrimony.

\(^{11}\) For a reproduction of this painting see: Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, *Bacchus and Ariadne*, 1743/45, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art, 2009. 20 Feb 2009 <http://www.nga.gov/fgci-bin/tinfo_f?object=46060>. Tiepolo’s painting also depicted the goddess Rhea who gazed at Ariadne. The incorporation of another female figure into the image complicates gendered readings of the pictorial iconology.
Further Ariadne took hold of the horse’s reins and drove the chariot thus leading the celebrations, meanwhile Bacchus sat by her side. Goldstein also depicted satyrs, putti and nymphs gathered around a crown of garlands and flying doves (Figure 23 and 24).

![Image](image.png)

Figure 22. Sybil Goldstein, Bacchanal, centre panel, 1983; acrylic paint, shelving paper, Cameron House, Toronto. Sybil Goldstein Personal Collection, Toronto.

In commemoration of the owners, she included their portraits in the ceiling murals. She depicted Anne Marie Sanella as Ariadne, Paul Sanella as a putti, Peter Sanella\textsuperscript{12} as a god, and Herb Tookey as a satyr.\textsuperscript{13} She also referenced the artists who visited the bar and portrayed them as putti floating in the sky. In acknowledgement of the queer community who frequented the hotel, Goldstein incorporated lesbian imagery into the mural and depicted two nude female nymphs embracing. Finally, she

\textsuperscript{12} Peter Sanella was the brother of Paul Sanella and he occasionally visited the hotel (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 5).
\textsuperscript{13} The image of Herb Tookey is no longer visible in the mural today. At some point in the ensuing years someone painted over the picture. In addition the hotel customers altered the images of the nymph, satyr and putti. They covered the eyes of the figures with brown and black plastic adhesive paper cut out in the shape of sunglasses.
represented the pop singer, Michael Jackson, as a satyr who balanced upon the ledge of the architectural molding surrounding the painting (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 4-5).

Figure 23. Sybil Goldstein, Bacchanal, front panel, 1983; acrylic paint, canvas, Cameron House, Toronto. Sybil Goldstein Personal Collection, Toronto.

By depicting Greek mythological figures, Goldstein engaged in what Andy Fabo refers to as practices of “cultural ricochet” (Fabo, "Nationalism/Internationalism/Regionalism", 71). He suggests that artists appropriated visual images from different cultures and historical periods thus subverting existing systems of representation (Fabo, "Nationalism/Internationalism/Regionalism", 71-72).

Andy Fabo and Sybil Goldstein were both members of the Chromazone collective who were active in Toronto from 1981 to 1986. The collective organized various exhibitions in Canada and abroad, and developed networks of support with national and international artists, thus facilitating collaborative practices of exchange (Goldstein,

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14 Rae Johnson, Andy Fabo and Bruce Cummer founded Chromazone in September 1981. The collective later expanded to include Oliver Girling, Sybil Goldstein, Hans Peter Marti and Tony Wilson. These artists remained the core members until Chromazone disbanded in 1986 (Goldstein, “The Chromazone Chronology”, n. pag.).
"The Chromazone Chronology", n. pag.). For a brief period they had their offices in Cameron House where they came into contact with other artists, musicians and theatre professionals.¹⁵

They developed cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural approaches to art-making as evident in the exhibition, Chromaliving (1983) at Harridge’s Department Store in Toronto. This show included Canadian, American and European artists who produced multimedia works that blurred the boundaries between painting, sculpture, installation, architecture, furniture, textile design and fashion (Lypchuk, “Chromaliving”, 44-49).

By organizing creative projects in public urban spaces, Chromazone followed through on their objectives as outlined in their manifesto which they published in 1982. They

¹⁵ Before moving their offices into the hotel, they worked from a gallery space which was located in the apartment of member Oliver Girling. They also coordinated exhibitions, concerts, performances, poetry readings and film screenings at various other galleries in Toronto and abroad. In addition they organized public programs at Drake Hotel, The Theatre Centre, Funnel Cinema and Edward’s Book Store (Goldstein, “The Chromazone Chronology”, n. pag.).
declared that “We want images of the working life: office, construction site, classroom, club; the sporting life; rock and roll, sex, astronauts; the domestic life; and the daily life of artists. We believe in the capacity of artworks to address the complexities of late Twentieth Century living in Toronto . . .” (Rhodes 6).

As a member of Chromazone, Sybil Goldstein wrote the manifesto in collaboration with her fellow artists. The document thus offered insights into her painting practices and working techniques. She depicted contemporary scenes in Toronto which showed figures engaged in everyday activities at work and in the home. Her ceiling mural at Cameron House portrayed the people who inhabited the hotel space in which she exhibited her work. Further she painted a wedding scene which focused on the feast following the marriage of Bacchus and Ariadne. Hotels traditionally served as places where newlyweds went for their honeymoon in order to consummate their marriages. Goldstein’s painting carried through these sexual undertones by showing the characters in various stages of undress with their bodies entwined in amorous embraces.

She painted the hotel patrons and customers in the guise of mythological figures which symbolized various human traits and characteristics. For instance the satyr was half man and half beast and served as Bacchus’ boisterous and licentious companion. The nymph was a goddess who represented female sexuality and carried an orange rose which symbolized desire. The putti was a winged infant who engaged in mischievous pranks and played with various props and accessories (Pierce 108, 110). One putti held up a mirror which appeared in paintings of the Greek hero Narcissus who fell in love with his own image and succumbed to the vice of vanity (Ovid, 3: 407-509). This figure took up the position of the viewing subject and the viewed object, thus disrupting the painting illusion.
The reflective surface of the mirror lay on the same level as the surface of the canvas thus bringing into focus the play of color, shape, texture and line. Goldstein painted with loose, sweeping brushstrokes varying the tonality and hue of color thus creating a sense of rhythm and movement across the picture plane. She also experimented with techniques of perspective in order to correct the visual distortion that occurred when people looked up toward the ceiling. From this angle the painted figures looked like they were compressed together in a shallow field of vision. Goldstein corrected this optical illusion by adjusting the height, depth and angle of the figures so that they appeared to extend above and below the picture frame. She created a number of preparatory drawings for the painting in her studio and worked with a diminishing glass which allowed her to obtain the same vantage point as standing beneath the ceiling (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 2-4, 9-10, 26-28).

She then completed acrylic paintings based upon the preliminary sketches which depicted three different narrative scenes. Due to financial constraints she varied the background support on which she painted the images. She used canvas material for the front ceiling panel and shelving paper for the centre and back ceiling panels. Because the shelving paper was narrower then the murals, Goldstein divided the painted images into three and four strips. After preparing the works in her studio she transferred them to Cameron House. Interior decorator, Eugene Metzai pasted the canvas and shelving paper onto the ceiling ensuring that the edges of the painted image lined up with the gilded moldings framing the murals (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 2-4, 26-28).

In completing the installation, Goldstein researched Rococo paintings by the artists Giovanni Battista Tiepolo and François Boucher. These painters created ceiling murals and incorporated their works directly into the surrounding architecture. They
depicted figures which twisted and turned inward and outward from the edge of the architectural moldings. They showed cherubs floating in the sky and ascending into heaven thus replicating religious iconography from that time period (Barcham 37-104; Hedley 98-129; Whistler 105-188). To further underscore this connection with earlier artistic traditions, the patrons referred to the Cameron House mural as the Goldstein Chapel, thus associating the work with mural decorations completed during the Eighteenth Century.

Goldstein not only studied techniques of foreshortening, but she also used the same color palette as François Boucher who painted with enameled rich pinks and blues (Hedley 98-129). She incorporated her paintings in the three square gilt frames on the ceiling of Cameron House. All three panels included double outer frames but the interior moldings of each mural varied. Whereas the front panel was empty, the middle and back panels included inner gilded frames in the shape of an octagon and a quatrefoil. Goldstein painted a faux gilded inner frame in the front panel to resemble the quatrefoil in the back panel, thus integrating the wall mural into the architectural décor.

The painted frame served as an illusionistic device blurring the boundary between the real architecture and the pictorial imitation. This play between three- and two-dimensional space turned the viewer’s attention to the artifice of art-making by emphasizing the decorative ornamentation in the painting and the surrounding building space. The gilded frames matched the gilded entablature and archways which ran across the west and east walls of the bar of Cameron House. In addition local film designer, Hugh Poole painted faux pink and gold marbling on the ceiling surrounding Goldstein’s
The interior of the bar resembled Rococo architectural designs, which similarly incorporated gilded decorative frames directly onto the walls and ceilings.

Goldstein further painted modern day portraits of the owners and customers at Cameron House. She memorialized the hotel proprietors by showing them dressed in elaborate guises which highlighted different aspects of their personalities. She referenced acts of theatrical play which involved actors who conveyed differing emotional and psychological states through exaggerated gestures and poses. Cameron House hosted performances by the theatre companies, Hummer Sisters and Video Cabaret, who moved their studios into the building in 1982 (Hollingsworth and Taylor n. pag.; Lypchuk, “The Hummer Sisters”, 261, 264-265; Taylor 2-3, 6-7, 18-21).

The companies produced plays and constructed backdrop scenery with complex lighting systems, televisions screens and video projections. They followed the format of cabaret theatre which combined musical compositions with spoken dialogue and presented actors dressed in costumes and make up (Hollingsworth and Taylor n. pag.; Taylor 2-3, 6-7, 18-21). The performers moved back and forth between the stage and the seating area where they commingled with the visiting public. They blurred the boundaries between the actors and viewers and disrupted the narrative sequence by directly involving the audience in the theatrical productions (Hollingsworth and Taylor n. pag.; Taylor 20-21).

Sybil Goldstein similarly painted a series of staged scenarios which referenced Greek mythology. The figures resembled performers who mimicked and imitated

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16 A few years after Goldstein completed her murals the owners painted over the faux pink and gold marbling with dark purple which changed the appearance of her installation (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 4-7, 8, 27-28).
people’s actions and behaviors by exaggerating bodily movements. As a member of Chromazone collective Goldstein interacted with other artists who also created figurative images by emphasizing facial features and bodily gestures in order to convey emotional affects. In discussing the objectives of the collective, curator Richard Rhodes suggests that the artists reacted against contemporary art movements such as conceptualism. Conceptual artists produced idea based works and documented their thought process through written words and photographs. They questioned how art took on meaning in gallery exhibitions and critiqued the ideological framework surrounding museum displays. By contrast the Chromazone collective produced figurative paintings and drawings which explored humanist themes (Rhodes 6-11).

According to David Burnett, this dichotomization of figurative painting and conceptual art ignored the confluence of artistic movements and counter-movements within and across differing localities and regions (Burnett 8-21). Further the notion of a ‘return to the figure’ implied painting traditions which existed previous to contemporary art practices. Burnett argues that the art historical canon analyzed paintings and sculptures developed during the modernist period with particular focus on artists in Paris and New York. He critiques Canadian art discourse which examined works created ‘elsewhere’ and traced painting traditions back to European and American precedents.

By contrast Burnett describes the social, political and economic context in which artists exhibited and distributed their works in Canada (Burnett 16-21, 29-30). He analyzes in particular the Chromazone collective and defines their works according to the following characteristics:

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Burnett thus examines the works produced by the Chromazone collective in relation to local, national and international art trends. He further suggests that they experimented with various media and developed working techniques by borrowing from different disciplines of art-making.

As a member of Chromazone collective, Sybil Goldstein developed painting techniques by establishing networks of rapport with her colleagues and mentors in Toronto. She also came into contact with national and international artists through the various exhibitions, performances and readings which she co-organized with other members of Chromazone. In completing the ceiling mural at Cameron House, she painted images of her fellow artists and represented them as putti who fought one another in order to gain recognition and reward (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 4-5). Goldstein critiqued the government funding system which required artists to compete for grants. One of the figures held a calculator and pushed down on the buttons as if tabulating finances. Meanwhile his/her companion held a crown of garlands which served as an emblem of victory (Goldstein, Personal Interview, 5).

Goldstein examined the systems of adjudication within local, provincial and national art councils and explored the conflicting interests and agendas of the artists applying for government grants. Her approach to art-making recalled practices of critical aesthetics as developed by conceptual artists who considered how and why art gained significance within museum discourse. They reflected upon the evaluative
criteria established by curators, critics and academics in organizing exhibition programs in public and private galleries. The artists examined the hierarchical structures of classification and categorization surrounding museum displays which reinforced elitist concepts of taste. They analyzed the production and consumption of art in capitalist economies and explored the ways in which dealers and appraisers established works as commodity items for sale and purchase in tourist markets (Godfrey 17-52, 185-238).

In the next chapter I examine the management and regulation of art practices through cultural policies which demarcated areas for development in the urban downtown core. Focusing on policies established in Toronto from the 1980s to the present, government departments and corporate organizations assessed the economic impacts of cultural art production in tourist economies. They focused on the benefits of art, music, theatre and dance in terms of increased expenditure and revenue generation. The creative communities not only attracted tourists to the local regions where they attended cultural events and activities, but they also brought in customers to other businesses such as restaurants, retail stores, hotels, clubs and bars.

The emphasis on capitalist investments within cultural policies proved problematic for artists who engaged in practices of critical aesthetics. Artists examined the system of public and private funding surrounding processes of art-making and questioned who benefited from cultural production in consumer markets. They explored alternative ways of living and thinking and developed socially conscious approaches to producing and exhibiting art. Moving back and forth between galleries and the everyday spaces where residents lived, worked and socialized, they changed where and how people viewed and experienced paintings and sculptures. In the next chapter I consider
the ways in which artists disrupted the social, political and economic production of space by producing site specific works in hotel buildings.
Chapter 4: Cultural Policy and Urban Geographies

This chapter examines government mandated policy reform from the 1980s to 2003 which spurred cultural production and consumption in city centres by financing and supporting particular art projects that bolstered the urban economy. Policy analysts marketed and branded art districts in consumer markets, thus establishing city neighborhoods as tourist spectacles. They also assessed the economic value of cultural capital, consequently ignoring collective approaches to art-making rooted in community based activism. While urban development schemes redefined the city landscape, creative communities explored alternative ways of living and thinking by focusing on local knowledges as shaped by particular historical material conditions.

Policy writers focused on capitalist investments and returns in evaluating and funding cultural programs, while artists subverted and destabilized existing systems of power by negotiating the interests of the varying constituencies who inhabited urban centres. The underlying paradox between consumer demands in market economies and artistic interventions which disrupted institutional structures provided evidence of the intersecting and conflicting governmental, corporate and community agendas that came into play in city revitalization schemes. It is precisely these tensions and contradictions between processes of policy making and practices of critical aesthetics that redefined and reformulated the geo-politics of urban renewal by re-inscribing the boundaries and limits of cultural corridors, residential districts and tourist sectors.

In analyzing the conflicting goals of policy reforms, gentrification, and art-making, I examine the changing meanings of installation exhibitions at Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel. I argue that artists complied with and disrupted cultural policies which described the development of art districts in capitalist markets. I analyze the shift
from publicly funded cultural institutions to consumer based creative economies by comparing and contrasting the following two documents: Tom Hendry’s 1985 report, Cultural Capital: The Care and Feeding of Toronto’s Artistic Assets; and, City of Toronto’s 2003 report, Culture Plan for the Creative City. These writings provided evidence of the changing mandates underlying municipal policies which described the intersection of creative and capitalist economies.

In studying these reports, I explore three interconnected themes: the geo-politics of cultural production and consumption; the branding and marketing of art districts; and the contending objectives of corporate organizations and creative communities in managing cultural resources. I posit that policy reforms regulated and managed cultural resources by establishing art as commodity for sale and purchase. The development of cultural corridors and tourist districts thus perpetuated capitalist development schemes which responded to consumer demands in urban downtown cores. Local artists participated in and resisted market forces by disrupting the commoditization of cultural production and exploring practices of critical aesthetics which destabilized spectacles of tourist display. Creative communities redefined the geo-politics of city revitalization by producing site specific installations that de-contextualized and re-contextualized the surrounding space. By engaging in practices of art-making they changed how and why people inhabited urban neighborhoods, thus opposing the commercialization of downtown cores which increasingly served the needs of private corporations.

Tom Hendry discusses the economic benefits of increased investments in art and culture in his report, Cultural Capital: The Care and Feeding of Toronto’s Artistic Assets (1985). He evaluates and assesses the monetary value of cultural goods and services, thus quantifying art in terms of financial expenditure and returns. He establishes artists as
service providers in the information and communication economy. With this in mind creative communities produced works in consumer markets and organized exhibition and performance programs for visiting audiences (Hendry 1-3, 16-18). They thus brought in customers to the downtown core and revitalized inner city neighborhoods thus attracting corporate developers to the area (19-20, 35-39).

While describing the financial impacts of increased revenue generation in the art sector, Hendry critiques the public funding system surrounding cultural production during the 1980s. He argues that the local, provincial and federal governments provided substantial grants to regional institutions such as Royal Ontario Museum and the Art Gallery of Ontario. By contrast local cultural organizations in Toronto received less financial support even though they contributed more to the local economy than the larger museums and galleries (Hendry 1-19). Hendry suggests that this funding discrepancy provided evidence of cultural hegemony in Toronto. For instance provincial galleries organized exhibitions and public programs which promoted the values and beliefs of people from predominantly British Anglo Saxon backgrounds. By contrast Hendry discusses art organizations which developed culturally diverse programs by serving the needs of neighborhood residents who belonged to multi-ethnic communities (16-19, 40-43).

In examining community based programming, Hendry argues that local art collectives suffered from the cut backs in public spending from the late 1970s to the early 1980s. Consequently many artists lived in poverty which made it difficult for them to

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1 In discussing the local government, Hendry distinguishes between the City of Toronto and Metro Toronto which included Toronto, Etobicoke, Scarborough, East York, North York and York. The municipal government allocated funding for cultural services both to the individual boroughs and to the larger metropolis. (Hendry 79-90) This system changed when the surrounding boroughs amalgamated into Toronto in 1998.
produce, exhibit and distribute their works in the city. As low income earners they could not afford the rental rates in the downtown core and moved into impoverished neighborhoods where they contended with the economic and social inequities underlying urban renewal. Hendry discusses in particular the lack of work space for artists – which sometimes doubled as living accommodations – and describes the poor condition of the building facilities which housed production, exhibition and distribution centres (79-90). He recommends that the City of Toronto reduce rental rates and property taxes for artists, thus providing them with affordable working studios and exhibition venues. He also suggests that the federal, provincial and municipal government all increase spending on the arts by reallocating funds for grant programs. In addition he advises them to expand existing cultural organizations in the area to include municipal theatres, museums, community centres and video production facilities (103-110).

Hendry’s discussion of government investments in the arts brings me to the first theme in my analysis of cultural policy: he describes the geo-politics of cultural production and consumption within and across city regions by analyzing the system of funding surrounding the development of arts and heritage. More specifically he examines the uneven distribution of wealth and power in urban districts which negatively impacted artists who lacked the financial and material resources required to exhibit and distribute their works. He proposes an alternative approach to cultural development which prioritized creative communities in capitalist economies. He explores processes of city revitalization by describing re-investments in cultural production which contributed to urban renewal in the local region.

Despite Hendry’s recommendations for increased expenditure on the arts, government support continued to wane in the ensuing years. The Cultural Division of the
City of Toronto addresses this shift in funding in its 2003 report, *Culture Plan for the Creative City*. Whereas Hendry describes the system of government grants supporting cultural institutions, the City of Toronto document focuses on consumer spending in the creative economy. The writers discuss capitalist development schemes which resulted in the commoditization of downtown cores. In examining tourist markets, they describe cultural corridors such as University Avenue which extends from King Street to Bloor Street. They identify this city sector as an Avenue of the Arts which intersects the central business district at its southern most point and cuts across an affluent shopping sector at its northern most point (City of Toronto, Culture Division, 12-14).

In her assessment of the cultural renaissance in Toronto, Barbara Jenkins considers the effects of municipal policy on the local economy. She examines the collusion of private and public interests through government funding systems such as the SuperBuild Infrastructure program (Jenkins 178-180). The federal and provincial government implemented this program by providing grants for rebuilding projects to cultural institutions in the local and surrounding regions. They offered subsidies to various establishments situated in and around University Avenue including Royal Ontario Museum, Art Gallery of Ontario, Gardiner Museum of Ceramics, Royal Conservatory of Music, Canadian Opera Company, Roy Thomson Hall and National Ballet of Canada. According to Jenkins SuperBuild grants assisted these organizations with facility renovations by covering a certain percent of the costs incurred. However the government required that the participating establishments procure the remaining funds from corporate sponsors. The cultural institutions were not eligible to receive public subsidies until they secured private investments, thus making them more reliant upon capitalist markets (Jenkins 175-183).
The report, *Culture Plan for the Creative City* (2003) further situates these establishments in consumer economies. The writers describe the exhibition, music and performance centres on University Avenue which catered to people who had the income to purchase the goods and services provided in the more affluent neighborhoods on either end of the boulevard. Their discussion of the commoditization of art brings me to the second theme in my study of cultural policy. Namely, policy analysts brand and market cultural corridors to local and visiting tourists, thus establishing art districts as spectacles of display in urban centres (City of Toronto, Culture Division, 12-14). The resulting gentrification of the surrounding area contributed towards rising property values, thus excluding low income residents who could not afford the costs required to engage in upscale cultural activities.

In mapping out the Avenue of the Arts, the policy writers rearticulate geographies of power by establishing this urban sector as a cultural centre. They further identify University Avenue as a gateway into the local region and present Toronto as an entry point into Ontario and the neighboring provinces. They describe cultural development in Canada and argue that the museums, galleries and theatres located in art corridors contributed to the creative economy on a municipal, provincial and national level. In addition to the major cultural institutions listed above, the writers also reference the film and television industry, street festivals and community arts programs.² They propose that these organizations coordinated exhibitions and events in different sectors of the city, thus bringing increased revenue and expenditure into the local region. They compare Toronto

² The festivals they identify include the International Film Festival, Black History Month, Caribana, First Nations Awareness Day, Gay Pride, Fiesta Corso Italia, Asian Heritage Month and Ya Hala Festival. The community arts programs they list comprise Arts Starts Neighborhood Cultural Centre, Creative Spirit Centre, Famous People Players, 4Unity, Beat the Street and Sketch (City of Toronto, Culture Division, 30-33).
to other urban centres including Vancouver, Montreal, Chicago and San Francisco where cultural industries flourished. They suggest that the meaning and making of art extended beyond city borders to global markets which depended upon capitalist investments and returns (City of Toronto, Culture Division, 6-16).

In assessing the economic benefits of arts and heritage, the policy writers reference Richard Florida’s theories on creative cities. Florida argues that urban regions rich in cultural amenities attracted the creative class which included engineers, scientists, architects, artists, musicians and writers. He suggests that the creative class sought out culturally diverse cities as places to work, live and socialize in order to support their own lifestyles as highly educated, upwardly mobile professionals (Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 1-21). Florida’s analysis ignores the ways in which people accessed cultural resources in capitalist markets. He assumes that the creative class had the time and money to attend museums, theatres and concert halls which charged fees for attendance and program participation. He therefore fails to acknowledge that these cultural institutions excluded residents who lacked the income to cover the expenses of leisure and recreational activities.

In response to these financial disparities, the report, *Culture Plan for the Creative City* (2003) examines community based organizations which served consumers of differing ethno-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The writers describe Toronto as a culturally diverse city, and recommend that art centres expand their facilities and services in order to meet the needs of immigrants and newcomers. They point out the social benefits of creative cities, and suggest that art organizations allowed people to maintain ‘civic peace’ by providing them with the opportunity to explore divergent cultural values and beliefs (City of Toronto, Culture Division, 7-10, 30-33). This concept
of ‘civic peace’ depends upon mythic notions of unity and consensus, thus obfuscating the power differentials surrounding cultural production and consumption.

The policy analysts, for instance, examine community activities and events which functioned as ancillary programs to the exhibitions and performances coordinated by the galleries, museums, theatre companies, dance troupes and music halls located along the Avenue of the Arts (City of Toronto, Culture Division, 30-33). They describe neighborhood based organizations which worked in facilities situated outside of the cultural corridor. However these establishments received limited subsidies to assist with operation and management costs. The cutbacks in public funding forced them to become more reliant on consumer markets, and hence they produced goods and services for sale and purchase in capitalist economies. They contributed to the development of art and culture which increasingly came under the management and administration of government departments and private corporations.

In describing the cultural renaissance in Toronto, the report, Culture Plan for the Creative City (2003) fails on three counts. First, the writers quantify arts and heritage in terms of financial returns and establish cultural workers as service providers in capitalist markets. Second, they describe an Avenue of the Arts and identify cultural institutions which catered to economically privileged people who paid for the programs offered by these organizations. Third, they recommend that cultural workers develop inclusive programming without actually considering the various social and economic barriers which people confronted in accessing these services. Overall, then, the document is informed by hegemonic and capitalist processes which simultaneously delimited spatial boundaries (assuming the Avenue of the Arts as a central/unitary site of artistic
production), reified elite perspectives on art-making, and foreclosed diverse ethnic and economic participation in creative cultures.

In his analysis of cultural policies, George Yúdice describes the growing financial disparities underlying creative economies. He distinguishes between the professional managerial class who owned and managed cultural resources and the service providers who included people of various ethno-cultural backgrounds who produced arts and crafts for sale and purchase. In meeting with tourist demands, cultural workers mediated multiple and overlapping systems of power from government departments to private corporations (Yúdice 9-28). Yúdice’s discussion of the negotiation processes surrounding art and heritage programming brings me to the third and final theme in my analysis of cultural policy. Namely, I examine the ways in which artists, musicians and theatre professionals reformulated and reconstituted the social, economic and political infrastructure surrounding the administration of arts and heritage.

Yúdice posits that artists redefined cultural production and consumption, including who had access to financial and material resources required to manage creative industries. Discussing the governance and institutionalization of art organizations, Yúdice argues that creative communities developed networks of support within and across localities and regions. They simultaneously perpetuated and disrupted capitalist market economies by working through differing goals and agendas in the management and distribution of cultural property (Yúdice 28-39). Extending this line of inquiry, Sharon Jeannotte questions what counted as legitimate culture and considers who determined the terms and conditions surrounding the development of arts and heritage (Jeannotte 133-134, 139-141). She describes the differential access that people had to the funding required to produce, exhibit and distribute cultural resources. She further examines the
ways in which art gained meaning as cultural and social capital by enabling communities to participate in local collectives. These processes of exchange provided people with the opportunity to develop personal and professional affiliations with differing constituencies (Jeannotte 124-129, 134-137).

In analyzing these networks of support, I argue that artists developed critical aesthetics and disrupted consumer markets, which transformed cultural districts into tourist spectacles. While engaging in alternative social and political practices, artists worked within existing systems of power. They not only took on positions as administrators and directors of galleries, but they also acted as board members for artist run centres and served as faculty in university and college departments. They adjudicated granting agencies which provided the financial and material resources necessary for cultural art production. In addition they formed associations which defined the rights and responsibilities of artists in their professional fields of work. Working both within and outside galleries which existed alongside other cultural and recreational facilities, artists contributed to the economic and cultural production of space.

At the same time, creative communities participated in oppositional movements which disrupted the institutional structures of power surrounding capitalist development. Reformulating practices of inclusion and exclusion, they facilitated processes of urban renewal which simultaneously enabled and disenabled social formations. That is to say that they participated in local collectives by establishing exhibition and distribution centres in city districts. However they displaced low income tenants and workers by opening up work studios and art galleries in impoverished neighborhoods. The rehabilitation of the local economy thus mobilized creative industries while leading toward the dissolution of existing community affiliations. Participating in existing power
structures, artists created a space to articulate an alternative vision of cultural production. The artist administrator contended with gentrification and the limits of policy reform by redefining city beautification schemes.

These conflicting agendas underlay cultural policies which described processes of urban renewal surrounding contemporary art practices. For instance local communities resisted the uneven distribution of wealth and power by engaging in social and political protests and demanding equal access to housing and property rights. Artists negotiated this uneasy push and pull between ground level activism and capitalist expansion by engaging in cultural art production. They rehabilitated the surrounding district to make city spaces more livable for diverse socio-economic and ethno-cultural constituencies. However they also turned urban neighborhoods into tourist spectacles, thus contributing to increased property values for the benefit of corporate institutions which increasingly took ownership over city streets. These processes – from policy proposals to artists’ complex relationship with the administrative and creative politics in the city – demonstrated how urban renewal unevenly impacted upon the production of space while simultaneously facilitating art spectacle. The gentrification schemes intersected with government policies that promoted cultural corridors and tourist districts to consumer audiences.

In responding to market demands artists re-envisioned the urban landscape by negotiating the social, political and economic infrastructure surrounding city revitalization as articulated within cultural policy. Creative communities thus reformulated the geo-politics of space and redefined commercial, residential and cultural districts by contending with the administrative, governmental and business organizations which regulated and managed urban properties. These negotiation processes provided
evidence of the intersection of creative and capitalist economies while pointing toward the tensions and contradictions within policy reforms. Artists took up a paradoxical position by facilitating cultural production and consumption in the downtown core. While they created art for public display which resulted in the aestheticization of the city, they also explored new approaches to living and thinking in resistance to capitalist economies. Producing works in public urban spaces, they participated in oppositional movements which disrupted hegemonic discourses underlying cultural renaissance projects. Artists gave voice to contradictory and dissenting subjectivities thus establishing urban sectors as sites of creative and critical intervention. They altered the ways in which people perceived and understood city neighborhoods where local residents and workers gained a sense of identity, place and belonging.

Public Sited Art and City Beautification Schemes

Artists created and exhibited works in local municipalities which underwent revitalization as government and corporate organizations implemented civic beautification schemes. Creative communities interrupted urban planning by producing and installing site specific art in cultural corridors which formed part of capitalist development in the downtown core. In order to gain further insight into the relationship between contemporary exhibition practices and gentrification, I now examine public art policies. More specifically, I focus on the 1989 report, The Art of the Avenue: A University Avenue Public Art Study completed by the architectural firm du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier. This document identifies University Avenue as an art district and connects to the report, Culture Plan for the Creative City (2003) which similarly establishes the boulevard as a cultural centre. In examining these policies, I focus on three overlapping themes: the regulation and management of public sited art in downtown cores; artistic
interventions into urban renewal; and the re-articulation of community politics through critical aesthetics which disrupted the social, economic and political production of space. I explore the paradoxical position of artists who both complied with and disrupted capitalist development in city districts by producing site specific works that simultaneously sustained and subverted tourist spectacles.

Artists participated in public art projects and installed their works in walkways and parks, thus establishing local neighborhoods as exhibition displays. These urban beautification schemes fulfilled the mandates of government departments which regulated city sectors by implementing cultural policies. For instance the report, *The Art of the Avenue* (1989) describes the various monuments located along University Avenue focusing on the relationship between the works and the surrounding boulevard. In assessing and evaluating the sculptures, du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier outline the goals of the Public Art Policy and Advisory Committee established by Metropolitan Toronto in the late 1980s.

Acting on behalf of the municipal government the committee stipulated that legislative and financial institutions set aside 1% of their budget for art purchases (du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, 85-89, 118). Du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier describe this by-law in their report while discussing the administration of art projects in urban spaces. They distinguish between ‘public’ buildings owned and operated by city departments and ‘private’ property managed by business companies. They suggest that corporate buildings intersected streets and boulevards which local residents and workers used on a daily basis. As such private investment firms were accountable to the public in selecting art to display on their property. Du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier argue that the works which represented the
specific interests of the donors and patrons of these organizations did not serve the broader public (du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, 54-56, 88-89).

They outline specific guidelines regarding the subject matter and thematic content of the monuments exhibited on University Avenue. They identify cultural corridors which government and corporate organizations managed by defining public art policies in city regions. Through these means municipal departments restricted and limited people’s access to urban districts by monitoring and surveying the properties where artists displayed their works. These regulatory procedures impacted the ways in which people experienced local neighborhoods by reinforcing prohibitive codes of conduct. Cultural policy re-inscribed geo-politics of power by focusing on the administration of public art exhibitions in downtown cores.

In outlining the procedures and protocols for displaying sculptures in city districts, du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier suggest that artists consult the Public Art Policy and Advisory Committee. They argue that creative communities were answerable to the public whose interest the committee represented in determining the evaluation criteria surrounding exhibition displays. Yet the policy writers fail to acknowledge what constituted the ‘public domain’ and discuss consensual processes of decision making which ultimately reinforced hierarchical structures of power. That is to say that they outline the objectives of an art advisory board who determined the terms and conditions under which artists incorporated sculptures into the surrounding streetscape. The committee decided what was and was not acceptable, thus both prescribing and proscribing where and how artists produced, exhibited and distributed their works in the public realm.

Further the board members imposed artistic standards by describing the curatorial mandates surrounding city wide exhibitions. According to du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier art in
the ‘public domain’ had to have universal significance for the residents who lived and worked in the city. They argue that the works along University Avenue were located on a civic boulevard which functioned as a gateway to the local region. As such the sculptures depicted people and events that represented Canada as a nation (du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, 88-86, 90, 115). The writers perpetuate romantic notions of social cohesion in describing the ‘public’ who they suggest shared common, universal beliefs which the artists reinterpreted in producing works. In describing public art as a symbol of Canadian nationalism, they situate the pieces in an urban sector which they identify as a district of political power where various government and corporate buildings were located.

They describe the sculptures on University Avenue including war memorials and statues of political leaders which met with community consensus and approval. These pieces provided evidence of historical monuments installed in public urban space and offered insight into changing artistic practices in the City of Toronto. Du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier reinforce cultural hegemony by describing the lineage of Euro-American sculptural traditions which artists reacted against in producing works for display (du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, 16-25). Thus the writers assess public art against historical precedents which they prioritize as earlier examples of commemorative monuments.

In addition, the report, The Art of the Avenue (1989) analyzes sculptures created by contemporary artists who questioned existing systems of representation. Du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier critique works which perpetuated imperialist discourses as evident in statues of monarchs and politicians. Instead they describe art produced by and for various ethno-cultural communities. According to the writers these pieces gained meaning for the diverse audiences who inhabited public urban space. For example feminist artists created sculptures which celebrated women’s accomplishments in Canadian history, thus
disrupting patriarchal systems of control. In examining these works, du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier argue that monuments functioned as sites of discord and dissent in city neighborhoods. They advocate for artistic freedom, yet also establish guidelines for the appropriate content, form, materials, and scale of public art (du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, 54-55, 82, 93-98). They suggest that artists meet with the Public Art Policy and Advisory Committee throughout the different stages of planning and installing their pieces, ensuring that their proposals conform to the requirements established by the members.

Art critic, Miwon Kwon examines cultural policies developed by government departments which regulated exhibition displays in city districts. She proposes that policy analysts followed integrationist practices by describing the harmonic relationship between public art and the surrounding environment (Kwon 56-72). It is precisely this integrationist approach which du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier advocate in their assessment of public art in Toronto. Although they describe controversial works, they argue that the sculptures blended into the urban landscape. Further, they suggest that monuments met with community approval. Ultimately this process of consensus served nationalist agendas by establishing public art as a symbol of Canadian culture. The report, The Art of the Avenue (1989) carries through these objectives by situating the works on University Avenue which functioned as a gateway into the local and surrounding regions.

University Avenue is a significant location of artistic and geographic debate because it serves as a main thoroughfare through the city of Toronto. As such it acts as an economic, political and social centre of power where different public and private institutions are situated. In mapping out this geographic location, urban planners followed conformist policies by constructing large scale building projects which served government organizations and business corporations. These administrative and
bureaucratic departments reinforced hierarchical structures of control which restricted how and why people accessed the surrounding urban spaces. Establishing University Avenue as a gateway further institutionalized the downtown core and demarcated the boundaries and limits of business and government districts in the city of Toronto, the province of Ontario and Canada as a nation state.

It is precisely these geo-politics of power which du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier re-inscribe by analyzing the art works along the boulevard. That is to say that they perpetuate conformist notions of cultural art production by collapsing public sited sculpture with municipal and nationalist agendas which supported the status quo. Although they describe practices of discord and dissent surrounding contemporary exhibition projects, they subsume these acts of disruption to policy mandates which centralized urban expansionist schemes in the downtown core with University Avenue as the main locus of power. By situating public art in this political framework, the report, *Avenue of the Arts* (1989) divests public sculpture of its potential to subvert or contest the social and economic production of space. Instead the writers map out city regions according to cultural imperatives which ultimately shore up existing geographies of power.

I argue that artists undermined policy reforms by interrogating and interrupting public urban sites on a political and artistic level. I follow Stephan Schmidt-Wullfén who examines contemporary art practices which gave voice to contradictory and dissenting perspectives and points of view, thus destabilizing notions of “public order” which government departments promoted by implementing urban beautification schemes. However artists depended upon the political and economic infrastructure required to coordinate and implement city wide exhibitions which limited the efficacy of their works
This then leads me to question to what extent artists contended with the contradictions of critical aesthetics which simultaneously resisted the “public order” while remaining limited and restricted within that political realm.

Miwon Kwon further complements my concerns by analyzing theories on community politics. She critiques city wide exhibitions which turned urban districts and neighborhood communities into spectacles of display. She suggests that curators followed a prescriptive approach by pairing artists with disenfranchised or marginalized groups in order to address specific social issues and concerns (Kwon 100-111). According to Kwon this selection criteria reinforced essentialized notions of ‘ethnic’ identities by defining collective groups according to social and cultural differences. Further exhibition coordinators promoted concepts of ‘mythic unity’ by focusing on the cohesion and integration of differing subject positions within the intended framework of community collaborations (118-126, 145-152).

This prescriptive approach underwrites cultural policies developed in Toronto from the 1980s to 2003. Policy analysts universalize the public domain by describing the residents and workers who inhabited city spaces as an inclusive and multi-ethnic community. They critique cultural institutions which reinforced Eurocentric structures of power and knowledge and instead identify art organizations which served people of differing ethno-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. However they establish these community based programs as tourist spectacles by marketing and branding cultural corridors in consumer markets. Cultural policies promote what Kwon refers to as “the idealized specter of community” by perpetuating notions of civic pride which depended upon unity and consensus (Kwon 148-149). The policy makers thus ignore the different
ways in which people accessed city sectors which government departments regulated through urban beautification schemes.

By contrast artists engaged in processes of radical dissent and disrupted the commonsense and conformist projects articulated through cultural policies that served a multiculturalist and integrationist agenda. Creative communities undermined existing structures of power and knowledge by intervening in the administrative, governmental and bureaucratic infrastructure surrounding city redevelopment. They contested notions of the ‘public order’ by facilitating practices of community activism which gave voice to dissenting and antagonistic constituencies. They positioned themselves in urban communities by working through the conflicting interests of business and residential organizations which formed local collectives in city neighborhoods.

Miwon Kwon explores these complex workings of power by analyzing the overlapping and contending agendas of the various participants involved in public art projects. More specifically she examines the re-articulations of community politics through critical aesthetics which subverted the social, economic and political production of space. Developing upon this line of inquiry, I look specifically at the ways in which artists responded to the objectives outlined by different levels of policy administration in order to delineate how their art-making destabilized creative social spatial expectations.

In discussing the negotiation process surrounding community based art, Kwon argues that “all subjects within this network [were] internally split or estranged as well, continuously negotiating a sense of identity and subjectivity through differential encounters with the other” (137). She suggests that artists initiated continued ongoing dialogues and discussions by responding to the diverging perspectives and points of views of differing subject positions throughout the planning and inception of site specific works (126-137).
This complex, rather than conformist and/or top-down approach to community art, offers insight into the installation exhibitions at Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel. Both of these buildings are located on Queen Street West which is situated outside the Avenue of the Arts as described within cultural policies developed by the municipal government. By exhibiting works in these hotels, artists disrupted policy reforms which established University Avenue as a civic centre. Instead they moved into an urban neighborhood which included galleries, shops, restaurants and clubs where people lived and creatively engaged with the city through everyday interactions. The local artists occupied public city spaces by organizing exhibitions which redefined the boundaries and limits of cultural corridors, heritage sectors and tourist districts.

On Queen Street, the artists produced site specific works in hotels which combined galleries, performance venues, bars, and room rentals. The installations included permanent object based displays which remained in the buildings for extended periods of time. The works did not conform completely to concepts of public sculpture as the artists located the pieces in different areas of the architectural site. For instance they displayed their works in the short and long terms accommodations which functioned as private spaces where people engaged in personal activities. The installations existed in hotels which blurred the boundaries between public and private, interior and exterior, thus destabilizing notions of ‘publicness’ which underlay critical art discourse.

By exhibiting site specific works on the premises, the artists changed people’s understandings and perceptions of their surroundings. They engaged in social movements, thus disrupting hierarchical systems of representation on a conceptual and experiential level. Focusing on Napoleon Brousseau’s installation Ten Ants (1984) at Cameron House and Mille Chen’s room design Chinoiserie (2006) at Gladstone Hotel I suggest that the
artists subverted urban planning by exploring environmental activism and post colonialist discourses which challenged the hegemonic ideologies perpetuated through cultural policies. Whereas Brousseau recreated eco-spheres which destabilized acts of territorialization surrounding industrial expansion, Chen re-articulated processes of cultural embodiment which resulted in the dislocation of racialized subjectivities.

In examining the hotel installations, I borrow from Kwon’s analysis by considering artistic interventions into geographies of power which both enabled and disenabled community formations. I posit that artists inhabited public space and participated in local collectives who asserted and contested property rights and ownership in the downtown core. At the same time, they rehabilitated urban neighborhoods thus displacing economically disenfranchised tenants who moved to other sectors of the city. By producing site specific works in the hotels, the artists contended with the multiple and at times conflicting agendas of the varying constituencies who took up lodgings in the buildings.

Artists situated themselves as professionals in their fields by contributing to hotel renovations which formed part of revitalization projects in city districts. They thus re-envisioned urban beautification schemes which government departments and corporate businesses defined through cultural policy initiatives. These policy reforms served the interests of public and private organizations which branded and marketed art districts in consumer markets. One the one hand, artists carried through these objectives by establishing the downtown core as a site of exhibition display. On the other hand, they lived and worked in the surrounding neighborhood and aligned themselves with low income residents who resisted urban renewal which resulted in rising property values and a decrease in affordable housing. In examining the paradoxical position of artists within
processes of gentrification, I consider the ways in which they de-contextualized and re-contextualized historical narratives surrounding urban regeneration. By engaging in critical art discourse artists both reinforced and/or disrupted mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion by working within and across divergent social formations.

**Napoleon Brousseau’s Interventions in Urban Space**

In re-conceptualizing public art within discourses on urban regeneration, I argue that artists engaged in localized acts of resistance by working across geographic scales from the community spaces where residents and workers interacted to the institutionalized city districts where differing constituencies negotiated systems of power and knowledge. Participating in alternative social and political practices, they redefined politics of identification, dis-identification, belonging and unbelonging. This line of inquiry proves useful in examining Napoleon Brousseau’s installation *Ten Ants* (1984) at the Cameron House. Originally the work included 11 sculptures of Ants roughly 3 feet by 1 foot which Brousseau created from coat hangers, gaffing tape and fiberglass. He painted the Ants white and affixed them to the exterior of the Cameron House so that they appeared to crawl up, down and across the front and side facades of the building (Brousseau 5, 19-20, 26-29) (Figure 25).

The changing narratives around the installation offer insight into the ways in which site specific art functioned as spectacle of display. In commemoration of the Pope’s visit to Toronto in 1984, hotel co-owner, Paul Sanella painted the exterior walls with the papal colors of purple and gold. He asked Brousseau to produce *Ten Ants* (1984) as an irreverent gesture which simultaneously established the Cameron House as an alternative art bar while intercepting the publicity surrounding the Pope’s visit (Sanella, “The Ants”, n. pag.). In order to garner media attention, Sanella wrote a letter to the
papacy asking the Pope to bless the hotel during his travels to Toronto, but the
Archdiocese refused his request. The *Toronto Star* article which covered the story
indicated that Brousseau titled his work *In Preparation for the Papal Visit*, thus
connecting the installation to the Pope’s arrival in the city (“Will the Pope Bless Art?”, n.
pag.).

Figure 25. Napoleon Brousseau, Ten Ants; gaffing tape, newspaper, wire coat hangers,
fiberglass, paint, Cameron House, Toronto. Photograph by Peter MacCallum. 1987. Peter
MacCallum Personal Collection, Toronto.
During this time period Brousseau was a member of the collective Fastwürms, which produced various installations incorporating religious symbolism. For instance their piece *Nec Ung Deo, Nec Mille Scuta (Neither One God, Nor 1000 Shields)* (1983) included wooden scaffolding which replicated the helm of Noah’s Ark. In addition the artists produced heraldic shields which represented the Stations of the Cross (McGrath 74-75; Fischer, *Perspective 88: Fastwürms*, 13-16). In discussing the installation, Barbara Fischer focuses on the traditional use of shields by soldiers during war and argued that Fastwürms “establish[ed] the link between monotheism (Christianity) and its militaristic ambitions of converting and spiritually colonizing the new continent” (Fischer, *Perspective 88: Fastwürms*, 14). In recreating and exhibiting historical artifacts, the collective thus critiqued hierarchical systems of display which reinforced Eurocentric discourses. They questioned practices of imperialist conquest in missionary settlements in Canada which served the interests of colonialist governments.

Although Brousseau’s installation did not incorporate religious iconology, the piece gained meaning within the studio practice of Fastwürms who examined the history of Christianity and colonialism. The work commemorated the Pope’s visit to Toronto and established the Cameron House as a destination point within the papacy’s travels through the city streets. In driving through the surrounding districts, the pope hired security guards who monitored and surveyed the crowds. Brousseau’s work functioned both as a media spectacle and as a counter-narrative to the religious ritual which took place in the local neighborhoods. Engaging in subversive humor, Paul Sanella wrote to the

3 Fastwürms was founded by Napoleon Brousseau and Kim Kozzi in 1978 and later expanded to include Dai Skuse. In creating films, the collective shot a series of scenes, then cut the reels of tape the length of a worm and randomly joined them back together again. The name of the collective referenced this working process. In addition to films, they also produced performances and installations. Brousseau left the collective in 1991, but Kozzi and Skuse continued to work as a collaborative (Brousseau 13; Dault, "Because I'm Not Particularly a Traveler", 39).
Archdiocese in order to gain notoriety in the local press. In asking for the papacy’s blessing, he thus challenged the sanctity of the Roman Catholic Church which regulated and policed urban spaces.\(^4\)

In subsequent years the installation changed as Brousseau repaired the sculptures, removed damaged works and replaced them with updated versions. In addition the building façade altered as Paul Sanella painted the exterior walls different colors. Brousseau’s work further took on new meaning within the shifting history of the architectural site (Brousseau 5-6, 19-20, 27-30). For instance when someone stole one of the ants from the façade thus reducing the number to ten, Sanella re-named the installation *Ten Ants*. The title was a play on the word ‘tenants’ and referenced the inspections by city representatives who condemned the single occupancy rooms on the upper floors of the Cameron House as “illegal dwellings” because the building did not meet health and safety standards (Sanella, “The Ants”, n. pag.). Sanella informed the local press of the work and gained media attention in the surrounding neighborhood. The reporter covering the story critiqued city inspections and eventually the government backed off, thus allowing the owners to offer the rooms for tenancy to artists, musicians and theatre professionals (Sanella, “The Ants.”, n. pag.; Sanella, Personal Interview, 8-10, 12-13, 19-33; Tookey 2, 4-10, 12-13, 15-19). Yet the change in clientele led to the relocation of the existing low income residents who lived on the premises before the new owners took over the property (Sanella, Personal Interview, 11; Tookey 3-6).

Thus the historical narratives around the installation described politics of dissent which simultaneously enabled and disenabled community formations. Within this urban

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\(^4\) Brousseau later traveled to Rome with Fastwürms in the early 1990s and visited the Vatican. He purchased a certificate at the local gift shop which included the Pope’s signed blessing and gave this to Paul Sanella to display at the Cameron House upon his return (Brousseau 30).
context site specific practices both facilitated and interrupted the economic production of space which represented the interests of divergent constituencies including art communities, business entrepreneurs and neighborhood residents. More specifically artists rearticulated geographies of power as mapped out within cultural policies which marketed and branded art districts in capitalist economies. It is precisely this contradiction in public and private interests which came into play when creative communities produced installations.

Brousseau’s installation similarly gained attention in the local media, thus taking on the function of public spectacle in consumer markets. The press associated the piece with tactics of resistance and established the work in opposition to systems of surveillance through which government organizations regulated public urban sites (Sanella, “The Ants”, n. pag.). In approaching artists to produce works for display the owners of the Cameron House altered the surrounding environment. They re-envisioned city spaces by exhibiting installations in the building, thus changing the ways in which people inhabited the urban downtown core. Brousseau responded to the needs of the proprietors by incorporating sculptures into the architectural façade.

Brousseau’s installation depicted hybrid insects which combined together the body parts from several different species of ants (Figure 26). They also resembled the character of the ‘Alien’ featured in the films produced by the artist during this time period (Brousseau 11-15; Oille 18-21). Working in collaboration with the collective Fastwürms, he experimented with cinematic narratives by combining together a sequence of stills which juxtaposed a series of disconnected events and actions. A number of these films focused on the theme of alienation and presented Brousseau as an extraterrestrial being. His costume included a rubber mask with protrusions extending from different parts of
his face which resembled the antennae which ants use as feelers in moving around and searching for food (Brousseau 10-16; Oille 18-21). In discussing the artist’s films, Jennifer Oille describes the character of the ‘Alien’ as a “social outcast” which signified the “subjective isolation” of the abject other in contemporary society (Oille 19-20).

Figure 26. Napoleon Brousseau, Ten Ants (detail); gaffing tape, newspaper, wire coat hangers, fiberglass, paint, Cameron House, Toronto. Photograph by author. 14 May 2007.5

Brousseau’s films connected to the installations produced by Fastwürms who similarly explored the theme of alienation. In discussing the collectives’ works, Barbara Fischer focuses on concepts of “cultural amnesia” and argues that the artists examined the impact of modern technology on the environment. She describes the erasure of histories

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5 This photograph shows an ant which Brousseau completed in the late 1980s. This ant replaced one of the earlier sculptures that he produced in 1984.
through practices of territorialization which re-mapped existing landscapes by destroying ecosystems and displacing the people who lived in the surrounding localities and regions (Fischer, *Perspective 88: Fastwürms*, 12-16, 19-22). She argues that “the pathology of amnesia” resulted from “the unceasing dissemination of information (information from and about elsewhere) through contemporary communications technologies” (Fischer, *Perspective 88: Fastwürms*, 16). Fischer describes shifts in structures of knowledge and power as people transgressed real and imagined borders and territories. She posits that these processes of dislocation impacted people’s sense of identity and belonging by forcing them out of their homes. They thus took up the position of the exile, who moved from one locale to another (Fischer, *Perspective 88: Fastwürms*, 6-7, 19-22). Brousseau similarly examined processes of ‘othering’ which served to alienate individuals by establishing them as outsiders. His works took on additional meaning in the context of urban renewal which resulted in the forced evictions of low income tenants who relocated to impoverished districts. These exclusionist mechanisms thus contributed to the dissolution of community formations within and across city regions.

In contrast to technological systems of territorialization, Brousseau’s installation at the Cameron House presented a colony of ants moving across the façade of the building thus referencing bio-spheres. These ecosystems functioned in opposition to urban structures of governance which delimited geographic regions for development as a means of spatial conquest. Brousseau’s interest in ants stemmed from the time he worked at the Royal Ontario Museum where he accessed their insect collection. He was particularly drawn to the industrialism of ants which organized into large groups and followed collective approaches to gathering food, harvesting supplies and building habitats (Brousseau 8-10). He also referenced works by surrealist artist Salvador Dali
who similarly depicted swarms of ants crawling over objects, animals and people. In Dali’s paintings the insects take on an ominous and foreboding presence and represent the artist’s own fears and anxieties about death and mortality (Brousseau 9; “Salvador Dali: Analysis and Interpretations”, n. pag.).

While Brousseau borrowed from this painting iconology, the image of the ant changes in significance in his installation. Focusing on processes of art-making, Brousseau’s working technique recalled Fastwürms’ method of approach. In opposition to museum practices which preserved paintings and sculptures by reinforcing conservation standards aimed to protect works against the ravages of time, the collective created ephemeral and temporary installations. They combined together vegetal matter and natural minerals with urban waste and mass produced objects, thus destabilizing hierarchical systems of classification within canons of art history (Fischer, Perspective 88: Fastwürms, 6-14, 17-22; Sloan 25-26, 29-30). In discussing the ways in which they recycled discarded materials, Joanne Sloan posits that “Trees as much as oil drums [were] exhibited as cultural artifacts, not emptied of prior signification, but revealed instead during the process of accruing new meaning” (26). Similarly Brousseau’s installation took on multiple and contradictory meanings in terms of the material processes and technical approach the artist explored in producing the work. In addition the visual imagery incorporated various symbolic references which altered the surrounding architectural site on a conceptual and perceptual level.

Brousseau engaged in critical aesthetics by exploring various strategies to art-making including: spectacles of display which intercepted media publicity; practices of political dissent within discourses on tenancy rights; tactics of resistance which addressed ecological issues; and process based approaches which critiqued the institutionalization of
art. His work thus served as a site of exchange through which differing historical narratives both gained and lost significance within the debates on urban regeneration. In examining the shifting interpretations around the installation, I consider both the art community who lived and socialized at the Cameron House as well as the former hotel residents whose eventual absence from the architectural site provided evidence of the negative consequences of city revitalization. While urban regeneration offered new prospects for economically deprived neighborhoods, it also resulted in the displacement of people from the downtown core. Within this urban context, site specific practices intersected politics of contestation through which differing constituencies negotiated public and private interests.

These complex socio-spatial processes prove useful for examining the critical aesthetics underlying Brousseau’s work. He not only engaged in practices of dissent by opening up systems of representation to divergent perspectives and points of view, but he also re-inscribed particular modes of understanding. His method of approach subverted elitist notions of aesthetic taste, yet also followed systems of evaluation as developed by critics and curators working in museum and gallery institutions. His installation formed part of the structures of knowledge and power which established artists as professionals in their chosen fields of work. His piece *Ten Ants* (1984) framed the architectural site within contemporary art discourse, thus establishing the hotel space as an alternative exhibition venue.

Brousseau thus contributed to the aestheticization of the city which formed part of urban revitalization schemes. In approaching artists to produce site specific installations and performances at the Cameron House, the hotel owners expanded their clientele to include painters, sculptors, filmmakers, videographers, musicians, writers and theatre
professionals. They used the art to advertise the hotel by engaging in media publicity and developing marketing strategies which attracted the attention of the local press. Further they supported the Toronto art scene in order to bring in new customers, thus fulfilling their business mandate which focused on building networks of rapport with creative communities in the surrounding area. More specifically the owners promoted artists who re-articulated critical aesthetics by reformulating their working methods in accordance with standards and criteria established by their colleagues and mentors who engaged in cultural production both within and outside of gallery institutions.

These systems of evaluation removed site specific practices from the social and political processes surrounding the economic production of space. In negotiating professional affiliations, artists re-inscribed networks of power by opening up production, exhibition and distribution centres in urban downtown cores. The subsequent development of art and design districts contributed to the gentrification of city sectors. These approaches to urban planning granted and denied people access to local neighborhoods. For instance the low income tenants at the Cameron House relocated to new premises, thus vacating the single occupancy rooms which artists subsequently moved into. These acts of displacement provided evidence of the political inequities underlying city revitalization. The installation exhibitions thus intersected with processes of urban renewal which both enabled and disenabled differing community formations by reformulating systems of inclusion and exclusion within debates on property rights and ownership.

Gladstone Hotel as Site of Political Contestation

My analysis of site specific exhibitions focuses on the ways in which artists reformulated politics of identification, dis-identification, belonging and unbelonging. I
argue that artists reclaimed city spaces by engaging in cultural art production. They re-envisioned public urban sites which took on multiple meanings for the communities who resided in the surrounding neighborhoods. By participating in hotel exhibitions, they thus came up against the contending objectives of the differing constituencies who inhabited the premises. It is precisely these conflicting agendas which directors Derreck Roemer and Neil Graham examined in their film Last Call at the Gladstone (2007). Located on Queen Street West a few blocks away from the Cameron House, Gladstone Hotel similarly experienced the impact of gentrification which spread along this sector of the city as real estate corporations purchased properties for development. Capitalist reinvestments in the surrounding district in recent years pushed out low income residents who could no longer afford the rental increases. These processes of city revitalization intersected urban beautification schemes as outlined within cultural policies which demarcated art corridors, heritage sectors and tourist districts.

In regulating cultural production in the downtown core, government departments supported rebuilding projects which served consumer markets. Located in this urban context the Gladstone Hotel functioned as a tourist destination by providing various facilities and services to local and visiting audiences. The hotel owners responded to the pressures of growing market economies by expanding and updating the interior and exterior décor of the building. Yet the restructuring of the hotel impacted the existing workers and residents whom the new proprietors evicted after taking over the property. These processes of displacement were the inevitable outcome of reformist policies which focused on the rehabilitation of urban neighborhoods to the detriment of people living in poverty who landlords removed from buildings undergoing reconstruction. Roemer and
Graham explored these inequitable practices of city revitalization in their filmic history of Gladstone Hotel.

In addition to conducting interviews with the residents, staff and owners, the directors also collected information from various news sources and provided their own personal recollections of the hotel where they socialized with the tenants and clients. They followed the change in ownership from brothers Allen and Herb Appleby to independent entrepreneurs Michael and Anne Tippen who purchased the premises in partnership with Margaret Zeidler in 2000. Shortly after taking over the property Tippen renovated the bars on the first floor of the building in order to bring in new clientele. Meanwhile the residents’ rooms upstairs remained in a state of disrepair. Further he raised rental rates making it difficult for existing tenants to continue living on the premises. In describing the narrative, Roemer and Graham showed images of the bars crowded with people. They contrasted the newly redesigned interiors with the hallways on the top floor which were run down and badly in need of restoration. They followed the chambermaid Marilyn Maskell as she cleaned the rooms for the predominantly male clientele who paid weekly thus earning them the nickname of the “stays.”

Maskell described the deteriorating condition of the accommodations which suffered from years of neglect. She purchased curtains and paintings in order to make the rooms more livable, yet these decorations did little to alleviate the decrepit interiors. Maskell expressed her concerns over the welfare of the “stays” who she developed bonds and connections with over the years. While recording Maskell’s memories of the former inhabitants, Roemer and Graham also described the experiences of previous resident Maryanne Akulick. Hunched over with shopping bags in hand, she walked in the hotel lobby and across the street wandering from one location to another. Unlike the “stays”,
she lived in a room on the second floor which provided greater safety and security for women, but came at a higher cost. Roemer and Graham examined the feminization of poverty which placed Akulick in a marginal position in the hotel. To further situate her as the ‘female other’, they showed her standing at the window looking out at the camera from behind the glass pane. They removed Akulick from the foreground space and placed her on the opposite side of the framed window view.

Akulick thus existed on the border between the interior and exterior, in a state of transition continually moving from one place to another. These shifts in the visual field signified processes of dislocation, thus referencing the practices of inclusion and exclusion surrounding gentrification. Roemer and Graham examined the impact of relocation schemes on the tenants by describing the differing social classes who staked claims to property rights and ownership in the ensuing battles over the Gladstone Hotel. Exploring the growing tensions between the co-owners, the directors indicated that Margaret Zeidler entered into court proceedings with Michael Tippen after he hired security guards to evict the existing tenants and fire the staff in February 2002. After gaining full property rights, Margaret Zeidler passed over the management of the premises to her sister Christina Zeidler. Although initially Christina Zeidler intended to retain the residents and staff, the building required extensive reconstruction in the ensuing years which forced the Zeidler family to relocate the tenants in 2004.

According to Roemer and Graham the building suffered years of neglect which left the Zeidlers with no choice but to complete renovations throughout the bars, rooms and lobbies. In examining the transition, the filmmakers showed run down decrepit rooms with missing ceiling tiles, worn out floor boards and broken furniture. The camera provided close ups of water seeping in through the windows and cracked walls. Roemer
and Graham juxtaposed former images of the deteriorating building with views of the reconstructed interior focusing on the remodeled rooms on the upper floors. The directors indicated that the Zeidlers attracted new clientele, yet their approach to redevelopment resulted in the eviction of the former residents. Focusing on the tensions and contradictions underlying urban renewal, they interviewed long term worker Shirley Ann Lowrey who questioned Christina Zeidler’s decisions in managing the building. Lowrey revealed her own intolerant attitude by expressing discomfort over the various events organized for and by the queer community which Zeidler supported as part of her own lesbian activism.

The film thus presented the hotel as a site of contestation where differing communities asserted and contested politics of identity and belonging. In discussing the architectural renovations, Christina Zeidler described the artist in residence program she coordinated. Her goals coincided with the objectives of government organizations which developed cultural policy in response to the growing concern over the lack of affordable live/work space for artists in the city. Policy analysts re-inscribed geo-politics of cultural production and consumption by focusing on the rehabilitation of existing building sites which architects redesigned by incorporating working studios and exhibition venues into the refurbished interiors. However these renovation schemes resulted in the displacement of low income tenants who formerly resided in the accommodations which artists moved into.

It is precisely these conflicting agendas which Roemer and Graham addressed in discussing the artist in residence program at Gladstone Hotel. They followed Christina Zeidler as she toured Allyson Mitchell’s art studio which included a collection of stuffed
toys, crocheted blankets, drawings and paintings.\(^6\) This work space contrasted with the room of Maryanne Akulick who similarly displayed her own personal collection of cups, plastic bottles, mugs, newspapers and tin cans in her room. Zeidler legitimized Mitchell’s display of objects as contemporary art practice and connected her works to the paintings and sculptures exhibited in the adjoining hotel rooms and hallways. By contrast the building management evicted Akulick from the premises for amassing an excessive amount of personal mementos and established her obsessive hoarding as a violation of health and safety standards.

In examining the ways in which the art community displaced the former tenants, Roemer and Graham described the absence of the staff and residents from the hotel space. In response to their questions regarding the evictions, Christina Zeidler discussed the exhibition which she organized on the first floor of the building which documented the social history of the architectural site. The film did not focus on the exhibition, but I had the opportunity to visit it while attending the open house in 2007. The show included portrait drawings of the former workers completed by Marc Ngui who incorporated brief descriptions into the images which recorded the sitters’ experiences at the Gladstone Hotel. In addition Zeidler displayed newspaper articles and a didactic panel which discussed the change in ownership and the impact this had upon the tenants and staff.

An article by Sheila Gostick for instance described the demise of hotel residences in the neighborhood. According to Gostick these establishments provided cheap lodgings and allowed patrons to forego background checks which limited people’s access to housing accommodations. However as corporate developers bought properties in the surrounding area, they converted the hotels into trendy nightclubs by catering to higher

\(^6\) For further discussion of Mitchell’s installations at Gladstone Hotel see Chapter 5.
paying clientele. Urban regeneration thus perpetuated the uneven distribution of wealth and power across geographic regions by determining how and why people inhabited public urban spaces (Gostick, n. pag.). The didactic panels suggested that the Zeidler family took an alternative approach by addressing the needs of the existing tenants while relocating them to new premises. They emphasized the importance of sustaining personal connections with neighborhood communities.

In addition to the textual material, the exhibition also included artifacts uncovered during the renovations including menus, coasters, inventories, wine lists, drink cards and grocery receipts. Christina Zeidler also exhibited photographs which showed the Gladstone Hotel both before and after renovations with a section documenting various events and performances most prominent among which included burlesques and vaudeville entertainment. The visual and textual material offered insight into Zeidler’s business mandate. She established her approach in opposition to capitalist development schemes by reinforcing romanticized notions of mythic unity. The didactic panels for instance indicated that the goals and objectives of the owners coalesced with those of the former staff and tenants. What the exhibition failed to address were the contestations surrounding the process of relocation as initiated by the Zeidler family and the impact this had upon the residents who lived in the surrounding neighborhood.

Roehmer and Graham’s film by contrast focused on the conflicts between and among the tenants and owners of the Gladstone Hotel. Although they explored inequitable processes underlying city revitalization, they did not reflect upon the political implications of their own practices in the context of urban regeneration. That is to say that they did not consider the ways in which they positioned themselves as filmmakers working in the downtown core of Toronto. They screened Last Call at the Gladstone
(2007) at the Toronto documentary film festival and thus formed part of the networks of artists who engaged in cultural production in the local region.

In addition they circulated and distributed the film to a wider public audience by screening it several times on TVO as part of the series, *The View from Here* in April 2007. TVO subscribed to a particular selection process based upon their assessment of the form and content of the works submitted for airing. Within this context, the hosts of *The View from Here* framed the film in order to meet with the goals and objectives of the company network. By presenting their film on television Roemer and Graham turned the Gladstone Hotel into a spectacle of display for specialized consumer markets. As such they took up the same paradoxical position as the artists who participated in the redesign of the room accommodations at the hotel.

Both instances revealed the uneasy push and pull between capitalist and creative economies in which the profit gains of gentrification collided with the ethics of social consciousness underlying contemporary art practices. This raises questions about the negotiation process surrounding cultural production which intersected consumer markets. Artists participated in alternative political practices by engaging in institutional critique which extended from museum exhibitions to tourist spectacles. In examining public sited art, I locate the works in an urban context by evaluating cultural policies which branded city districts in market economies. The resulting aestheticization of cities served the interests of corporate and government organizations that supported capitalist re-investments in urban regions. By contrast artists disrupted the social and economic production of space by undermining the hegemonic discourses surrounding gentrification.

In the case of Roemer and Graham’s film, they subverted community politics by negotiating changing subject positions throughout the inception and production of the
film. They participated in what Miwon Kwon refers to as “provisional community praxis” at one moment representing the needs and interests of the staff and residents and at another exploring the agendas and objectives of the owners (136). The film overlapped partial and fragmentary narratives which examined the differing impacts of urban renewal on the diverse constituencies who inhabited the hotel. Roemer and Graham participated in politics of contestation by evaluating and protesting the regulation of city spaces through capitalist development projects. In their historical re-interpretation, public and private interests clashed as people contested and asserted property rights which redefined the limits and boundaries of urban neighborhoods where residents engaged in daily activities.

Within this film narrative, the Artist Designed Rooms on the upper floors of the building functioned as sites of dissent. Roemer and Graham described the absence of the former inhabitants from these accommodations. In re-envisioning the surrounding architectural site, the artists thus confronted politics of displacement. The hotel space was fraught with tensions which resurfaced in the retelling of the past as the tenants recounted their experiences living and working in the building. In discussing the turbulent history of the hotel, Roemer and Graham indicated that:

... the hotel ... was falling apart, for the Gladstone the people knew and loved time had run out. It was just hard for everyone to accept. Romantic ideas of the hotel had blinded them to the reality of what it was. But as beautiful as it is today it is missing the people we met.

They described a moment in time that once was, but which had since passed away and remained within the collective memories of the former inhabitants. The spoken exchanges between the directors and the residents further played against a backdrop which juxtaposed previous images of the decaying and deteriorating hotel architecture with contemporary views of the remodeled room interiors. Roemer and Graham disrupted the
cinematic sequence by displacing one time and space with another and exploring the personal narratives erased or lost within the different layers of history embedded in the architectural site.

They presented nostalgic images of the building which took on particular meaning for the people who inhabited the premises. More specifically they compared the hotel to small town bars where everybody knew each other. They reinforced mythic concepts of social cohesion by describing familial and community relations in the neighborhood of Parkdale. Further Roemer and Graham discussed processes of exchange through which people developed networks of support with friends and colleagues. They described community practices which contradicted the political commentary they provided on the housing rights of the former tenants. In exploring the conflicts between the current owners and the previous residents, they memorialized the past by subscribing to romanticized notions of community neighborliness. They recounted nostalgic narratives which perpetuated ideals of unified and coherent social formations.

Roemer and Graham’s film provided a historical framework for examining the exhibitions organized at Gladstone Hotel. They proposed that artists carried through the goals and objectives of Christina Zeidler by redecorating the architectural interior and exterior. They connected site specific practices with gentrification processes which resulted in the marginalization of economically disenfranchised communities. I extend upon the film narrative by offering my own description of Millie Chen’s installation, Chinoiserie (2006) in room 418 of the hotel (Figure 27). In order to gain an understanding of her work, I interviewed Chen who offered insights into the content and context of her piece. My analysis explores the artist’s conceptual process and working methods by examining the multiple and at times conflicting meanings surrounding her exhibition. I
re-interpret Roemer and Graham’s discussion of site specific works and describe the ways in which Chen politicized the architectural space, thus challenging existing ideological discourses.


In exploring the Artist Designed Rooms on the top floors of Gladstone Hotel, Roemer and Graham toured Chen’s installation. They established the building as a site of consumer spectacle where art practices intersected commodity markets. Although Chen responded to the needs of the owner in remodeling the building décor, she also critiqued
tourist spectacles of display in capitalist economies. Within the framework of critical aesthetics, the installation disrupted the surrounding site on a social and symbolic level. According to Chen, she engaged in a “subtle interrogation” of the hotel’s history which reached back to the Victorian Era when it was constructed by architect, George Miller (Chen, Personal Interview, 3, 8, 10).7

In keeping with the original architectural style, Chen selected antique pieces for the room with spanned from the Nineteenth to the early-Twentieth Century. She also designed contemporary furniture which referenced earlier decorative art (Chen, Personal Interview, 7-9). More specifically, she played with ‘orientalist’ motifs which were popular at the turn of the century when colonialism spread to Asia.8 During this time period European fantasies of the ‘exoticized’ ‘Far East’ resulted in the appropriation of ‘orientalist’ decorative designs in furnishings and wall coverings. Quoting from Wikipedia, Chen argues that these motifs reinforced cultural stereotypes of the ‘racialized other’ by depicting scenes in which “fairyland, mandarins lived in fanciful mountainous landscapes with cobweb bridges, carried flower parasols, lolled in flimsy bamboo pavilions haunted by dragons and phoenixes, while monkeys swung from scrolling borders” (qtd. in Chen, “417 Chinoiserie”, n. pag.).

7 Completed in 1889 the building design followed the Richardson Romanesque style. The façade included a continuous sequence of arches and colonnades spaced at regular intervals. Miller also covered the architectural exterior with grey cut stone and red brick cladding. Particularly noteworthy are the corner tower and the gargoylees along the roof’s edge as well as the decorative sculptural relief beneath the second floor windows (“Hotel Architecture and History”, n. pag.; Bradley n. pag.).

These practices of cultural appropriation perpetuated myths of ‘authenticity’ by promoting Eurocentric systems of power and knowledge (Chen, Personal Interview, 4, 9). Colonialist discourses reinforced essentialist notions of identity formation by labeling people according to structures of categorization which established the body as a marker of ‘cultural difference’. These claims to ‘truth’ depended upon reductive stereotypes which reinforced racialized typologies by objectifying skin color, hair texture and eye structure. Fantasies of the ‘exoticized other’ served as a means to define cultural identities according to hierarchical codes of classification which reinforced oppressive systems of governance underlying colonial conquest. Further myths of ‘authenticity’ and ‘truth’ established cultural identity as transparent and knowable, thus obfuscating the pejorative construction of racist stereotypes within imperialist discourses.

In referencing ‘orientalist’ motifs it is precisely these processes of cultural embodiment which Chen addressed in her installation. Yet she did not merely critique social stereotypes but rather subverted them by examining processes of transculturation (Chen, Personal Interview, 4, 9; Hassan, "Re-Orienting Asian", 30-1). This is evident in the wallpaper design which simultaneously repeated and disrupted ‘orientalist’ decorative motifs. Chen ordered the wallpaper from an American distribution company and incorporated painted figures into the existing landscape scenery. The original design depicted blossoming trees with Asian men, women and children sitting and standing on the branches. Meanwhile monkeys balanced precariously along the tips of the trees. In addition to the already existing characters, Chen painted the following animals, people, props and costumes: qiling monkey, leopard, Baluch tiger, tourist, eurogirl, businessman, genetic ball, CN tower hat, Victorian mourning dress, boy with saw and monkey with saw (Chen, “417 Chinoiserie”, n. pag.; Chen, Personal Interview, 4-5, 6-8; Chen, “Projects”, 176.
In incorporating these characters into the landscape scenery, Chen explored shifting cultural identities. The figures took on various social, symbolic and metaphoric meanings in the context of the hotel rooms.

For instance the image of the tourist recalled the typical visitor who rented the lodgings in the hotel. The figure wore blue jeans and a brown jacket and sat beside an Asian man dressed in traditional jacket and pants with the same colors as the tourist’s clothing. The simultaneous linking and juxtaposition of contemporary and historical costumes suggested cross-cultural influences which spanned across generations. The bodily stance and gestures of the two figures further traced a movement of mirroring and counter positioning. The Asian man leaned in and turned his head toward the left, thus repeating the actions of the tourist who sat either beside or beneath this figure and positioned her body in the same direction while peering directly at the onlooker through a pair of binoculars.

This doubling and mimicking signified a split in acts of identification and dis-identification and disrupted the process of objectification through which the seeing subject monitored and regulated the observed other. In returning the gaze the figure subverted practices of display which established ‘ethnic’ cultures as exhibition for the viewing pleasures of visiting audiences. This recalled the installation *Kitchen* (1997) which Chen produced with artist, Tomie Arai at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery. Playing with notions of the living history museum, they replicated the interior of a kitchen complete with furnishings and various canned and dried goods stored in the cupboards (Chen, “Projects”, n. pag.; Firmin 16-17). Like *Chinoiserie* (2006), *Kitchen* (1997) included wallpaper and food packaging which incorporated ‘orientalist’ decorative motifs. The artists disrupted the pictorial iconology by overlaying the designs with
photographs of themselves in various poses looking out toward the viewer (Firmin 16-17).

Further they staged performances at regular intervals throughout the duration of the exhibition and invited guests to join them for lunch inside the kitchen. This destabilization of the systems of display surrounding museum practices carried through in Chinoiserie (2006) which similarly repositioned the viewer in the hotel room. Chen drew attention to the ways in which the onlooker situated herself as a tourist and deconstructed the regime of spectatoriality surrounding the marketing and commoditization of ‘orientalist’ decorative designs. She critiqued the mechanism of desire through which consumer market economies projected fantasies of the ‘exoticized other’ while making claims to ‘authenticity’ by reinforcing concepts of tradition located in a past separate from contemporary society. These primitivist fantasies were evident in the original wallpaper design which showed Asian figures dressed in historical costumes carrying bells, parrots, flags and musical instruments.

Chen added onto and transformed the existing decorative motif, by clothing one of the male characters in a Victorian mourning dress and changing another one into a eurogirl with traditional peasant clothing including long skirt and clogs (Chen, personal interview, 3, 7). These late-nineteenth-century costumes referenced the time period in which George Miller constructed the hotel. In discussing the installation, Chen suggests these images acted as ‘follies’ by playfully subverting the existing iconology embedded in the wallpaper design (Chen, personal interview, 4-6). They also led the viewer to re-read the decorative motifs on the surrounding furniture which depicted ‘exoticized’ landscapes where women in kimonos strolled among pavilions surrounded by blooming trees and flowers. Similarly the base of one of the lamps represented a stereotypical image of a
eurogirl in peasant costume which Chen copied and repeated in the wallpaper drawings (Chen, personal interview, 7). This movement back and forth between the walls, furnishing and accessories re-inscribed the surrounding space by inverting and contesting the symbolic meanings of changing cultural practices. Chen disrupted the systems of codes and conventions through which people regulated and monitored their bodies by contrasting and opposing differing identity markers, thus destabilizing existing structures of classification and categorization.

She combined objects and figures from different historical periods as evident for instance in the image of a man and boy wearing CN Tower hats (Figure 28). By referencing a popular tourist destination in Toronto, Chen located the installation in the surrounding urban landscape. In discussing her works she argues that “I explore[d] the relationship between sight, social systems, geography and phenomena . . . . My interest [lay] in the interrelation of image and coded space as key to defining cultural experience” (Chen, “Statement”, n. pag.). Chen altered the architectural site on a conceptual and symbolic level, thus changing the ways in which viewers experienced and understood public urban space. She rearticulated historical material geographies by disrupting ideological discourses which reinforced hierarchical structures of power and knowledge. She re-envisioned the city landscape by representing various cultural icons which took on particular meaning for the people who inhabited the urban neighborhoods where she situated her work.
The CN Tower for instance functioned as a tourist spectacle that allowed people to view and survey the streets and neighborhood from the observation deck several thousand feet above ground. The building turned the surrounding districts into a series of vistas that recalled the sequence of paintings hung in exhibition displays in gallery institutions. This aestheticization of the city fulfilled the needs of market economies which turned downtown cores into cultural corridors as part of capitalist development schemes. For instance municipal policies identified tourist attractions which contributed to the revitalization of inner city neighborhoods by bringing consumer audiences into the
local region. Chen however de-contextualized and re-contextualized the CN Tower by taking it out of the urban streetscape and placing it in an idyllic, pastoral setting. Further she turned the building into a piece of wearable clothing which seemed at odds and out of place with the other costumes that the figures dressed up in.

This recalls the performance installation *Yurtopia* (1995) that Chen produced with artist Evelyn von Michalofski for the Southern Alberta Art Gallery. In this piece the artists walked around wearing costumes with multiple pockets in which they stored various objects and materials collected from local stores, cultural centres, galleries, a post office and homes. These “living-culture-costumes” acted as portable museums which allowed Chen and von Michalofski to move from location to location where they recorded the personal narratives provided by the people they met along the way (Chen and von Michalofski, *Yurtopia*, n. pag.). Meanwhile in the gallery they constructed a tent structure referred to as a “yurt” which they made from felt. They created the felt by pressing together the various materials they gathered from local residents and workers.

In discussing the piece the artists indicate that the wearable art functioned as “body coverings which acted, physically and metaphorically, as the border between the gallery and the surrounding neighborhoods, between our bodies and other bodies of information” (Chen and von Michalofski, *Yurtopia*, n. pag.). *Yurtopia* (1995) is one of several projects in which Chen engaged in institutional critique by exploring the politics of representation surrounding exhibition and collection practices. In contrast to anthropological approaches which placed cultures on display for the viewer, she engaged in collaborative exchanges with artists, curators and participating audiences. She thus
disrupted hierarchical structures of interpretation by developing process based approaches which facilitated open discussions and dialogues.⁹

In producing *Yurtopia* (1995) Chen subverted museum practices by walking through city spaces. She participated in acts of remapping by exploring shared and collective remembrances, thus subverting mechanisms of display gallery exhibitions (Chen and von Michalofski, *Yurtopia*, n. pag.). Similarly Chen turned the CN Tower into wearable art in her installation *Chinoiserie* (2006), thus altering the function of the building. She presented the tower as one of several props and costumes from different historical periods and geographic regions. In creating the wallpaper design, she juxtaposed shifting cultural symbols by decoding and recoding processes of embodiment as signified through the clothing that people wore. These costumes acted as markers of cultural identity by representing specific localities.

The tower for instance served as a tourist spectacle in the City of Toronto and contributed to urban beautification schemes. Chen however destabilized practices of spectacularization which turned local cultures into display for the pleasures of visiting audiences. She disrupted hierarchical structures of interpretation that fixed and stabilized identity by exploring experiences of transculturation which intersected practices of travel. The figures depicted in the wallpaper moved from one moment and place to another, thus mirroring the actions of the tourists who inhabited the hotel room. The representation of the CN Tower hat further referenced the surrounding streetscape while visually removing the building from the actual place where it was situated. The image signified a series of

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spatial and temporal displacements both in the landscape scenery pictured on the
wallpaper and in the architectural space where Chen exhibited the installation. Located in
the neighborhood of Parkdale, the Gladstone Hotel lies several miles away from the CN
tower. It is one of the oldest continuously operating hotels as evident from the
architectural style of the building which contrasts with the modernist design of the
skyscrapers in the city.

Chen’s installation thus situated the hotel in relation to other cultural attractions
by mapping out public urban sites that existed in and around the building. She explored
points of convergence and divergence in the real and imagined landscapes, thus
destabilizing the viewers’ perceptions of their surroundings. In discussing her works, the
artist considers the ways in which public art facilitated debate among contending
constituencies. Focusing on critical aesthetics, she describes process based approaches
which re-conceptualized notions of ‘public’. She warns against theories on “community
practices” which reinforced idealistic and romantic notions of social cohesion (Chen,
"Public Art as Process", 22, 25). According to Chen, these approaches restricted or
limited the creative possibilities behind cultural art production. She critiques in particular
works which pandered to the public and instead describes art which initiated social
exchange. She suggests that “it [was] the lively exchange, no matter how antagonistic, of
opinions and ideas created by public involvement and interaction in the public art process
that [came] closest to an ideal” (Chen, "Public Art as Process", 22).

Chen’s critical art-making complements Miwon Kwon’s writing on community
practice which, as previously mentioned, focuses on the negotiation of differing subject
positions throughout the conceptualization and implementation of public sited art.
According to Kwon artists responded to the overlapping and at times conflicting goals
and objectives of neighborhood communities and curatorial collectives, thus reworking institutional affiliations (126-137). This line of inquiry coincides with Stephan Schmidt Wullfin’s analysis of the multiple and antagonistic publics who inhabited city spaces. Within this theoretical framework public art becomes the site of contestation and disrupts notions of “public order” through which government institutions regulated and monitored urban neighborhoods (Schmidt-Wulffen 416-419). Chen’s concept of community politics connects to critical art discourse and situates her works as architectural interventions. She not only facilitated social exchange between potentially antagonistic publics, but she also subverted systems of codes and conventions by re-inscribing acts of cultural embodiment.

Her installation changed the ways in which people perceived, experienced and inhabited their surrounding environment. Chinoiserie (2006) offered insight into Chen’s own art practices which “subtly interrogated” the social, historical and symbolic meanings of the architectural site (Chen, personal interview, 3, 8, 10). More specifically she subverted ‘orientalist’ decorative motifs found in Victorian era furniture and wallpaper design. Playing with notions of ‘folly’, Chen deconstructed and reconstructed ‘orientalist’ discourses while simultaneously referencing practices of hybridization by juxtaposing contrasting signs and symbols which signified varying racialized, gendered and sexualized identities (Chen, personal interview, 4, 6-9).

Her installation also intersected the political contestations surrounding the Gladstone Hotel. It is precisely these confrontations which Roemer and Graham examined in their film Last Call at the Gladstone (2007). They situated the Artist Designed Rooms in the context of the struggles between and among the differing owners, tenants, staff and clients who lived, worked and socialized at the hotel. Extending this line of inquiry I locate the hotel installations in the surrounding city neighborhoods where
varying constituencies made claims to property rights and ownership. Artists undermined urban beautification schemes and disrupted the social, political and economic production of space through which government organizations and business corporations regulated and monitored neighborhood districts.

Engaging in interventionist strategies, artists subverted mechanisms of display underlying capitalist development which resulted in the aestheticization of the city. For instance Chen’s installation Chinoiserie (2006) took on particular significance in the hotel which catered to consumer market economies. In redesigning the room Chen remained critical of cultural policies which turned the urban landscape into tourist spectacle. In examining processes of objectification which presented ‘exoticized’ cultures as exhibition displays, Chen destabilized systems of surveillance which operated at the level of the body by reinforcing the dichotomization of the seeing self and viewed other within discourses on tourism and travel. She engaged in critical aesthetics which challenged museum practices by exploring alternative ways of thinking and living, yet she also articulated working methods which borrowed from contemporary theory as discussed by artists, critics, curators and academics.

Her approach to art-making thus cut across institutional affiliations and re-inscribed the hotel space within current debates on political aesthetics. Consequently her installation contributed to the aestheticization of public urban space albeit from a critical standpoint. The Artist Designed Rooms at the Gladstone Hotel thus intersected and collided with capitalist development which catered to consumer market economies. The artists occupied a paradoxical position by complying with, while also critiquing tourist spectacles which formed part of urban revitalization. They enacted a series of
displacements by de-contextualizing and re-contextualizing the architectural site, thus repositioning the viewers in the surrounding hotel space.

Yet this repositioning also extended to include the former residents and workers whom the new owners evicted from the premises and moved to alternate accommodations in nearby and surrounding sectors of the city. In establishing public art as a site of political contestation, artists thus contended with the class struggles underlying urban renewal. This leads me to question, in my following chapter, who benefited from artistic interventions into the social, political and economic production of space? By rearticulating historical material geographies in what ways did artists situate themselves within gentrification processes which resulted from the uneven distribution of wealth and power across city districts? Finally, to what extent did they reformulate practices of inclusion and exclusion and negotiate public and private interests through which people asserted and contested politics of identity, place and belonging within debates on urban renewal?

I suggest that creative communities established the downtown core as a site of radical dissent by engaging in social movements which gave voice to differing gendered, racialized and sexualized subjectivities. By facilitating oppositional practices they participated in antagonistic public spheres where varying constituencies protested urban revitalization schemes. They thus mobilized community activism which undermined geographies of power by challenging hegemonic institutions in urban centres. In negotiating the economic and political infrastructure surrounding gentrification artists worked through the tensions and contradictions underlying renewal schemes which both enabled and disenabled social formations. They redefined cultural corridors, residential districts and commercial sectors, thus impacting how and why people gained access to
city regions which took on contradictory and conflicting meanings for tenants and workers who contended with processes of displacement, marginalization and disenfranchisement.
Chapter 5: Critical Aesthetics in Politicized City Space

This chapter examines the urban context in which artists produced hotel installations, in addition to the political contestations over property rights and ownership. By participating in exhibitions in the downtown core, artists positioned themselves in relationship to the varying constituencies who consolidated and resisted the geo-politics of urban development in the cities of London and Toronto. I argue that artists re-envisioned public city spaces by altering the building sites on a visual, sensorial and perceptual level. They incorporated photographs, sculptures, paintings and textile works into the architectural décors, thus immersing the viewers in multi-media installations. They worked with tactile and visceral materials which appealed to the senses of sight, smell and touch thus eliciting physical and emotive responses from visiting audiences.

In this, many artists created a space to challenge the ways in which people understood and experienced the surrounding environment. They explored corporeal and psychical processes by examining acts of embodiment within and across different geographic locations. They thus disrupted urban planning as implemented by corporate and government organizations which controlled and regulated neighborhood sectors. Put differently, I suggest that creative communities engaged in countercultural movements by protesting capitalist development schemes which turned city regions into tourist destinations. At the same time, and paradoxically, artists established the hotel sites as exhibition displays thus contributing to consumer market economies which commoditized urban districts.

In examining the contradictory position of artists who rejuvenated city neighborhoods, I analyze the following three themes: relational politics of space which focused on the contradictions and tensions underlying geographies of power; antagonistic
practices which enabled differing constituencies to assert and contest tenancy rights in city sectors; and critical aesthetics which destabilized and re-inscribed ideological discourses by facilitating tactics of resistance in politicized public spheres. I propose that artists redefined urban redevelopment by negotiating the varying agendas and interests of the business entrepreneurs, neighborhood residents and consumer audiences who inhabited the downtown core.

In examining the processes of negotiation surrounding site specific practices, I relate my discussion to Doreen Massey’s theories on relational politics of space. Massey argues that people engaged in practices of interconnectivity by working through individual and collective goals and objectives. She describes cities as heterogeneous places where multiple and conflicting communities re-inscribed politics of identity and belonging (Massey, *For Space*, 149-155, 180-187). In discussing the geometries of power surrounding the interactions between and among local residents and workers in urban centres, she describes the spatialization of politics within and across the private and public realms where differing constituencies engaged in everyday activities. Through these exchanges, communities contended with the competing trajectories surrounding urban renewal which served dissenting neighborhood groups.

According to Massey people re-formulated personal and political affiliations on a local, regional and international level. She argues that tenants participated in political engagements by facilitating local acts of struggle which reformulated systems of power and knowledge in city districts. She posits that they re-articulated processes of de-territorialization and re-terretorialization by intervening in intersecting practices and institutions which defined the boundaries and limits of geographic regions (Massey, *For Space*, 149-162, 180-187). They thus de-inscribed and re-inscribed structures of inclusion.
and exclusion which granted and denied people access to urban localities. Massey’s argument, then, demonstrates the ways in which communities – in particular those not specifically attached to urban planning and the legislative workings of city regions – contributed to the production of space.

I link this discussion on the politics of space with Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s writings on relational antagonisms. Laclau and Mouffe examine social formations which subverted and disrupted ideological discourses by re-articulating internal and external power structures (105-114, 122-127, 134-145). They discuss the paradox of oppositional movements which both supported and resisted social and political institutions. They argue that “the frontal opposition of many groups to a system c[ould] cease to be exterior to it and become simply a contradictory but internal location within that system” (139). These political processes emphasized the reconstitution of hegemonic formations through practices of radical dissent which attempted to destabilize existing systems of governance.

In examining site specific practices, I connect theories on urban geography and political hegemony in order to reveal the complex workings of power underlying critical aesthetics. Artists redefined the geo-politics of radical dissent by destabilizing existing government reforms which determined the territorial jurisdictions surrounding urban renewal. Creative communities engaged in local acts of resistance and contended with the intersecting agendas and interests of the varying inhabitants who laid claims to property rights and ownership in the downtown core. They worked through the differing goals and aims of business entrepreneurs and government agencies who defined the terms and conditions of city redevelopment in creative and capitalist economies.
Artists facilitated political aesthetics by exploring feminism, post colonialism, queer activism and environmentalism. In addressing differing racialized, gendered and sexualized identities, they re-articulated discourses of power which excluded and marginalized subaltern subjects. Focusing on installations at Embassy Hotel and Gladstone Hotel, I connect site specific practices to theoretical writings by Frantz Fanon, Elizabeth Grosz and Luce Irigaray, who each differently critique imperialist and patriarchal systems. Whereas Fanon explores cultural revolutions in Algeria which dismantled colonialisit military regimes, Grosz and Irigaray challenge masculinist discourse by examining corporeal and sensorial perceptions which destabilized processes of female objectification. In examining these critical texts, I argue that artists politicized the hotel sites by giving voice to racialized and queer communities who re-inscribed geographies of oppression and resistance within and across urban localities.

In creating hotel installations, artists disrupted the architectural space in ways that both opened up and closed down participatory politics through which people reconfigured processes of identification, dis-identification, belonging and unbelonging. They exhibited art in hotels which historically served as boarding houses for low income constituencies. Whereas the manager of Embassy Hotel retained the longstanding tenants, the proprietor of Gladstone Hotel evicted the residents from the building. The owners both enabled and disenbled social formations, thus impacting how and why artists engaged in cultural production. These two contrasting examples provided evidence of the ways in which political aesthetics both granted and denied people access to public urban space. Artists extended their critical interventions into hotel buildings, thus providing diverse audiences with the opportunity to re-interpret creative practices; yet these collective approaches to installation projects marginalized economically disenfranchised tenants as creative
communities occupied hotel buildings and reinforced contemporary art discourse which served to further alienate the residents whom the owners removed from the premises.

Related to questions of creative interventions are the strategies artists developed to politicize space. Rosalyn Deutsche explores critical aesthetics in her discussion of public sited art. She critiques theorists who establish the public sphere as a site of unity and consensus, while disregarding the structures of inclusion and exclusion which re-inscribe networks of power (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 279-290). She examines antagonistic relations by referencing Charles Lefort’s writings on radical democracy which focuses on the contestations between differing constituencies who de-legitimated and re-legitimated social and political space. She argues that “art that [was] ‘public’ participate[d] in, or create[d], a political space and [was] itself a space where we assume[d] political identities” (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 289). Her analysis of politicized public spheres proves useful in examining the ways in which creative communities facilitated practices of radical dissent in urban neighborhoods.

In discussing public sited works, Deutsche focuses on feminist artists who disrupted the regimes of spectacle. They critiqued concepts of the gaze which objectified women and established the female body as a projection of male fantasies and desires. In subverting the act of looking between the viewer and the viewed, feminist artists opened up the interpretative framework to multiple and changing perspectives. They established subjectivity as a site of political contestation by exploring the systems of representation through which people lost and gained visibility in the public realm (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 290-308).

Deutsche references Bruce Robbin’s notion of the phantom sphere in order to further explain critical aesthetics. Robbins critiques concepts of publicness which gave
the illusion of open and accessible space, while masking the power inequities underlying political engagements (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 1996: 319-320). Deutsche further suggests that the “phantom sphere” gave rise to agoraphobia as evident for instance in theorists’ lament over the loss of public space and civic unity. She posits that the nostalgic longing for social cohesion disguised attempts to fix and stabilize subjectivity through closed systems of meaning (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 318-327). Deutsche by contrast describes the dissolution of identity formations as varying constituencies worked through differences by negotiating conflicting subject positions. It is precisely these tensions and contradictions which underlay the politics of radical democracy in public urban spaces.

Deutsche’s discussion of critical aesthetics provides a theoretical framework for analyzing the installations produced at Embassy Hotel and Gladstone Hotel. By participating in exhibitions at these locations, artists negotiated competing ideological discourses. In altering the function and purpose of the buildings, they facilitated tactics of resistance and developed socially conscious approaches to art-making which disrupted consumer market economies. Creative communities engaged in political struggles by protesting gentrification schemes which resulted in increased property values, thus pushing out low income residents.

Yet the artists depended upon the economic and political infrastructure required to facilitate cultural production and consumption in the downtown core. They took up a paradoxical position by negotiating the uneasy push and pull between market economies and cultural activism which served conflicting goals and objectives. In responding to these contesting agendas, they disrupted the hotel sites in ways that both consolidated and undermined social formations. In some instances they opened up contemporary critical
discourses to the hotel residents by developing connections with diverse ethno-cultural and socio-economic collectives. In other cases they participated in renovation schemes which resulted in the eviction of the tenants, thus foreclosing the possibility of their participation in the hotel exhibitions. In producing installations, artists reformulated personal and professional networks of support which extended within and across differing community centres. They redefined the public and private spheres from the everyday places where people lived, worked and socialized to the hegemonic structures of power through which neighborhood groups re-inscribed the boundaries and limits of cultural corridors, residential sectors and tourist districts.

**Shelagh Keeley’s Architectural Displacements**

Shelagh Keeley demonstrated the workings of critical aesthetics in creating her untitled installation for Embassy Hotel in 1984 (Figure 29). More specifically, she intervened in the spatialization of cultural and social practices by addressing four overlapping themes: her journeys through Africa where she negotiated colonialist systems of rule; Frantz Fanon’s critical writings on imperialist conquests and cultural revolutions; practices of military exile which resulted in the marginalization of dispossessed communities; and processes of displacement which occurred within and across differing architectural and urban sites. In examining these intersecting ideological discourses, Keeley engaged in acts of political contestation by re-articulating urban geographies through which differing constituencies redefined acts of territorialization. Exploring interstitial spaces she disrupted structures on inclusion and exclusion through which people re-inscribed politics of belonging and unbelonging in city regions.
Keeley examined spatial displacements through her installation at Embassy Hotel which documented her experiences journeying through Africa from 1983 to 1984\(^1\) where she came into contact with residents of diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds (Keeley, Telephone Interview, 1, 3-5; Siddall 11).\(^2\) During her visits she gained insight into the personal and political histories of the local inhabitants who comprised Muslim, Arab and African communities. In subsequent years, she researched Amnesty International reports which analyzed the changing social, political and economic conditions in Africa. The documents critiqued European colonialism and recorded the human rights abuses.

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1 Keeley travelled to Tunisia, Algeria, Niger, Mali, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zaire (currently Democratic Republic of the Congo), Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Kenya (Keeley, Telephone Interview, 1, 3-5).

2 Keeley also travelled to Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia from 1973 to 1974 (Siddall 11).
perpetrated by military forces (Amnesty International, n. pag.; Keeley, Personal Interview, 9-10).

In order to understand the political aesthetics underlying Keeley’s installations, I consider the ways in which she positioned herself as an artist living and working overseas. I relate her method of approach to theories on transculturation developed by Mary Pratt. Focusing on practices of travel, Pratt describes the paradox of tourists who both critiqued and perpetuated systems of imperialist oppression. She proposes that European and American travelers engaged in acts of capitalist expansion by exploring countries ruled by colonialist governments. They recorded their experiences through narrative discourses which reinforced western structures of knowledge, thus further promoting existing institutions of power (Pratt, Imperial Eyes, 69-85). Keeley worked through these contradictions in her installations which referenced the people and places she encountered throughout her journeys in Africa.

Shelagh Keeley developed political aesthetics by exploring the history of oppression and resistance in colonized countries; her art examined processes of travel which resulted in the uneven distribution of wealth and power within and across city regions. In exploring the contending objectives of critical art discourse and cultural tourism, Keeley questioned processes of imperialism which opened up countries for exploration while perpetuating hegemonic systems of control. She supported justice movements in Africa where local activists fought for their independence as nation states. She also remained aware of her own privileged position as a white middle class woman journeying across the continent. Keeley negotiated changing racialized and gendered identities during her travels abroad. These exchanges underlay her site specific art which reformulated what Doreen Massey and Rosalyn Deutsche describe as politics of
contestation through which people re-articulated processes of identification and dis-identification (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 279-290; Massey, For Space, 149-162, 180-187). Keeley disrupted the spatialization of social and political practices by establishing Embassy Hotel as a site of critical intervention. She re-inscribed histories of colonialism in the building space, thus challenging institutional and governmental racism which excluded and marginalized African people.

Keeley produced her site specific installation in Room 31 on the second floor of the hotel which functioned as a private accommodation (Egerton 5). The installation included photographic views of Fort Lallemond in Algeria which the French Militia used as a torture centre during the War of Independence (1954 to 1962) (Figure 30). Keeley also incorporated texts into the installation which referenced Frantz Fanon’s revolutionary text Wretched of the Earth (1961) and Gillo Pontecorvo’s film The Battle of Algiers (1966) (Keeley, Telephone Interview, 3-5, 9, 11-12). By presenting views of a historic fort in North Africa in the room of Embassy Hotel in London, Ontario, she integrated the trauma of (post) imperialist struggles into a Canadian urban site.

In The Battle of Algiers (1966), Pontecorvo similarly critiqued colonialist regimes which imposed violent mechanisms of discipline and punishment. He explored the uprisings in the city of Algiers by recounting the history of the National Liberation Front (NLF) who staged a series of attacks and counterattacks against the French Militia. In examining the mounting tensions, Pontecorvo explored the human casualties of war which resulted in the deaths of civilians. He critiqued the French paratroops that arrested

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3 In 1954 the Algerian people founded the guerilla organization, National Liberation Front (FLN) and rebelled against French colonists who governed the nation state from the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Century. After years of brutal and violent warfare, the Algerian people gained independence in 1962 (Zeynep 1-10).
and detained Algerian people subjecting them to brutal methods of torture and interrogation. The ululation, wailing and chanting of the local inhabitants continued for several days, reminding the colonists that they could not silence the rebels. With mounting pressure from the United Nations, the French government granted the people their independence in 1962.


Pontecorvo’s film connects to Frantz Fanon’s book Wretched of the Earth (1961) which similarly discusses the Algerian War of Independence (1954 to 1962). Keeley hand wrote passages from the text on the walls of the hotel room, thus inscribing historical narratives in the space which focused on processes of colonization and decolonization. Fanon describes the exploitation and oppression of the Algerian people from the
Nineteenth Century onward when the French assumed control over the region by forcing the local inhabitants to adopt European values and beliefs (6-12, 44-52). They subordinated the Algerians by employing ruthless and violent tactics which caused irreparable physical, emotional and psychological damage.

Fanon examines the revolutions initiated by the Federal League of Nation who engaged in strategies of resistance, thus dismantling imperialist systems of regime. He describes acts of retaliation and counter-retaliation and argues that violence at the onset of the revolution was necessary in order for the Algerian people to gain their freedom from the French Militia (22-26, 32-37, 41-44). Further he discusses nationalist movements which allowed people to join together in collective action. He proposes that revolutionary politics spread from the rural regions to the urban centers, resulting in the establishment of guerilla organizations within and across different localities (21-24).

Fanon also discusses at length the role of cultural art production in the struggle for independence in Algeria. He describes revolutionary cultural politics which dismantled colonialist systems of oppression by exploring the tensions and conflicts underlying imperialist rule. He argues that artists, writers and intellectuals gave voice to the liberation movement by developing innovative and creative forms of cultural expression. Through their art and writing practices, they protested the injustices of existing governments and reclaimed the history of political struggle, which European colonists attempted to silence and suppress (Fanon 170-180). Fanon’s theories on cultural politics influenced and anticipated Keeley’s critical aesthetics that similarly explored the history of colonial oppression and resistance in Algeria.

By referencing Fanon’s text and Pontecorvo’s film, Keeley creatively produced site specific works which disclosed the complexities of politics, nation and space. She
provided an artistic vision of local struggles in Africa where guerrilla organizations dismantled apparatuses and techniques of power. These acts of insurgency facilitated processes of de-territorialization and re-territorialization in the hotel. By referencing these oppositional movements Keeley kept the local tied to elsewhere (Algeria, Africa and those places of violence brought forth by Frantz Fanon and Gillo Pontecorvo). In examining the political struggles in Algeria, she explored counter narratives which disrupted contemporary news media. Whereas journal reports sensationalized the violent uprisings in Africa, Keeley provided more complex readings of the events by juxtaposing texts and images which explored changing perspectives and points of view.

More specifically Keeley photographed the architectural interior and exterior of the torture centre in Algeria. She took pictures of windows and doorways which looked onto prison cells and courtyards where military officials incarcerated inmates during the War of Independence (1954 to 1962). The building was empty and abandoned when she visited the site and thus functioned as an archaeological ruin reminding tourists of the history of colonialism. The architectural space symbolized acts of military exile by segregating, isolating and marginalizing the former detainees in the compound. Further the prison was constructed of stone walls which prevented people from entering and exiting the premises.

In photographing the fort, Keeley journeyed from one room to another and moved through archways and stairwells which provided access to different wings of the building. These openings and enclosures delimited and circumscribed people’s movements in the prison complex. Keeley explored the spatialization of militaristic conquests through architectural designs which reinforced systems of inclusion and exclusion. She traced the maze of intersecting passages which bisected a series of rooms and encircled the
surrounding site. Keeley disrupted the field of vision by examining the fort from different vantage points, thus referencing processes of displacement and relocation enacted by government regimes which colonized countries during periods of imperialist expansion.

By addressing these issues in her site specific works, Keeley changed people’s perceptions and understanding of the surrounding environment. She worked within what Doreen Massey and Rosalind Deutsche refer to as ‘politicized urban space’ by exploring the conflicts and contestations through which people de-inscribed and re-inscribed geographies of power (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 278-290; Massey, For Space, 149-162, 180-187). Keeley engaged in oppositional practices and re-articulated critical aesthetics by examining the tensions and contradictions underlying colonialism. She de-legitimatized and re-legitimatized social movements through her art practice which radicalized the hotel site as a “cultural community centre” where multiple and at times antagonistic constituencies interacted. 4 Her work re-formulated counter-hegemonic discourses, thus disrupting the surrounding environment where people resided and worked on a daily basis.

In producing her site specific exhibition for Embassy Hotel, Keeley worked across differing institutional contexts. She relocated her piece from one architectural space to another, thus changing the content and form of the art. More specifically she integrated photographic reproductions of the Embassy Hotel installation in the work Chambre d’une jeune fille (1993) which she created for the show, Chambre d'Hôtel (1993). The artist run centre, Chambre Blanche organized the exhibition which included local, national and

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4 Bruce Barber refers to the Embassy Hotel as a “cultural community centre” and distinguishes the space from gallery institutions where security guards monitored and regulated visitors’ movements and behaviours. He argues that Keeley facilitated “social praxis” by creating an installation where tenants and staff engaged in processes of exchange (Barber 36-38).
international artists who produced temporary installations in various hotels throughout Quebec City (Loubier, “Échappée sur une pragmatique du site”, 157-163). Keeley created her piece in a room in the pension Château Grande-Allée which was located in a tourist district close to the downtown core (Gagnier 207).

Keeley hung photographs on the wall over the bed and displayed one picture on the mantel surrounding the fireplace. She de-contextualized and re-contextualized the surrounding space by referencing another building site. The photographs showed pictures of Fort Lallemond in Algeria which Keeley displayed in the hotel in London (Gagnier 207-109). She then re-photographed the pictorial reproductions and exhibited the duplicates in the pension in Quebec. This doubling or mirroring of a room within a room represented a series of displacements from one location to another which was layered with her intentional manipulation of space and time within differing urban localities. The windows and doorways in the photographs matched the windows and doorways in the room of Château Grande-Allée.

The framing and re-framing of the hotel sites disrupted systems of representation by blurring the boundaries between the real and imagined architecture. Keeley showed the rooms from different perspectives as she did in London. She examined shifts in internal and external perceptions by representing differing states of enclosure, dislocation and transference. In addition, Keeley explored corporeal processes by producing drawings of skeletal structures, bodily organs, vessels and arteries. She created the graphite sketches on hotel stationary and dispersed them throughout the room in Château Grande-Allée. She hung some of the images on the wall in the bathroom and displayed a group of pictures on the window ledge beneath a glass encasing (Gagnier 209; Keeley, Personal Interview, 7-8).
Keeley explored what Elizabeth Grosz refers to as bodily representations which took on varying social, symbolic and cultural meanings in particular geographic and historical contexts (Grosz, "Lived Spatiality", 31-32). Grosz examines practices of lived spatiality which resulted in the reconstitution and realignment of self and other. She describes the changing position of embodied subjectivities within and across differing locations. She argues that the self traversed the boundaries between inside and outside by internalizing and externalizing body images (Grosz, "Lived Spatiality" 39). Exploring the intersection of corporeal and sensorial perceptions, she analyzes the libidinal and psychical processes surrounding identity formation.

Grosz re-conceptualizes architectural theories which defined the functional and practical uses of buildings by demarcating and compartmentalizing public and private realms. By contrast Grosz examines sites of liminality by discussing bodily concepts and affects which remained in a state of flux (Grosz, "Architecture from the Outside" 60-62, 64-70). Referencing Gilles Deleuze’s notion of de-territorialization and re-territorialization, she analyzes architecture which moved beyond the bounds of conventions by pushing the limits of the possible. She describes radical intellectuals who thought outside of accepted practice, thus disrupting existing systems of power and knowledge. The reformulation of contemporary theories resulted in creative re-imaginings of public urban space. Further these architectural interventions intersected lived bodily experiences which traversed the interior and exterior, subjective and objective (Grosz, "Architecture from the Outside" 60-64, 67-73).

Keeley’s exhibition Chambre d’une jeune fille (1993) similarly re-imagined corporeal geographies. She examined representations of the body through her drawings which depicted the human anatomy. She juxtaposed these images to architectural
photographs which traced a journey through internal and external spaces. The pictures also depicted the Embassy Hotel in London, Ontario thus referencing another location where Keeley produced site specific art. The original installation exhibition at Embassy Hotel incorporated paintings which explored processes of embodiment. In discussing the piece, Keeley refers to the work as ‘architecture of emotion’ focusing on the acts of mark making through which she smeared pigment, wax and Vaseline/petroleum jelly on the walls and ceilings (Keeley, Telephone Interview, 11-12).

Keeley applied red, black and white paint layer upon layer in loose swirling brushstrokes which moved up, down and across the building support. She described the physical and emotive gesture of running her hands over the surface of the plaster, thus evoking visceral and sensorial responses in the viewer (Figure 31). The painting design contrasted with the photographs which depicted the segregation and compartmentalization of space in the torture centre in Algeria. Whereas military guards restricted and inhibited people’s actions and behaviours by regulating and monitoring the prison compound, Keeley exceeded the boundaries and limits of the hotel interior by traversing the surrounding building through her wall mural.

Keeley referenced practices of spatial dislocation which took on particular meaning in African imperialist history. European governments attempted to impose colonialist rule by fragmenting and dividing local populations across urban regions. However Algerian insurgents engaged in oppositional movements which de-inscribed and re-inscribed geo-politics of militaristic conquest. Despite the French army’s efforts to eradicate rebels, the revolution prevailed and people continued to fight for justice and retribution. They transgressed systems of law by reclaiming public city spaces as sites of guerilla warfare, thus eroding existing regimes of power. These disruptive practices
carried through in creative interventions as evident for instance in the graffiti painted on the prison walls in Algeria which Keeley photographed and incorporated into her installation.


These line drawings showed people and animals thus imparting a human presence into the architectural site where guards formerly detained and executed members of the resistance. Within this context, cultural production served as a means of asserting lost or silenced voices by speaking back to the oppressor through visual images which represented subaltern subjects who were missing or absent from the empty building space. The graffiti further connected to the drawings which Keeley displayed in the Embassy Cultural House gallery on the first floor of the hotel. She exhibited the sketches
at the same time that she completed the permanent installation in Room 31 of the building. The show included works from her African Journal series which Keeley completed in her studio in Lamu, Kenya in 1983 (Keeley, Personal Interview, 8-9). She was particularly interested in the wall drawings which the residents painted on their houses and incorporated this technique into her own site specific installations. She maintained a journal while she was abroad and filled the pages with graphite images and written texts which documented her experiences as she visited different countries (Keeley, Personal Interview, 8-12)

Keeley incorporated various symbols into her sketches which referenced African mythological narratives (Figure 32 and 33). She explored Dogon ritualistic practices which focused on the story of creation (Keeley, Personal Interview, 9-10, 19-20). According to ancient legend, the ancestors’ spirits took the form of animals which functioned as talisman for different bands of African people. She studied the pictorial iconography which decorated their homes where families passed along oral traditions from one generation to another (Keeley, Personal Interview, 9-10, 19-20; Roy 1-20). Her journal further provided abbreviated annotations which described her travels in Kenya. Ihor Holubizky critiques Keeley for appropriating African symbolic imagery in her drawings. Focusing on the exhibition of her African Journal series (1983) at Grunwald Gallery in Toronto in 1984, he argues that she established the works as commodity items for sale and purchase in western capitalist markets. He suggests that Keeley removed

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5 The information I collected does not provide exact dates for the exhibition of the African Journal series. Keeley probably showed the drawings at the Embassy Cultural House gallery for approximately one month at the end of summer or beginning of fall 1984. She then re-exhibited the sketches at the Grunwald Gallery in Toronto from September 29 to October 17, 1984 (Holubizky n. pag.).
African traditions of art-making from the cultural context in which people created the works (Holubizky n.pag.).


However, I argue that her African Journal series (1983) connected to the site specific installation she displayed at Embassy Hotel which critiqued French colonialist rule and explored guerilla movements in Algeria. Andy Fabo proposes that her installation “bec[a]me the diary of a perceptive and receptive passenger, passing through a land very different from her own” (Fabo, "Nationalism/Internationalism/Regionalism", 72). The African Journal (1983) thus represented a series of spatial and temporal displacements by examining the artists’ changing subject position as she negotiated varying social and political contexts. In traveling across the country, Keeley contended with cultural policies through which local authorities administered and managed heritage programs. For instance the custom officials in Zaire did not want her to take her drawings
out of Africa. She depicted leopards which served as the official symbol of Sese Seko Mubutu who was the president of Zaire from 1965 to 1997. The animal took on political, cultural and religious meaning for African people who believed it was sacrilegious to remove the icon from the country. Eventually the administrators allowed Keeley to retain the sketches upon the agreement that she respect the significance and import of the imagery in Zaire culture (Keeley, Personal Interview, 9).


Keeley thus negotiated the commercial and government infrastructure surrounding the distribution and circulation of cultural artifacts within and across nation states.
Through her travels she gained insight into African history by engaging in processes of exchange with people of varying ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. Yet her journeys intersected western expansionist schemes which impacted post colonial struggles as countries sought to gain independence from imperialist governments. Keeley explored her experiences as a white middle class tourist who enjoyed privileges denied to African people while questioning systems of governance which resulted in the expropriation of land and resources for the benefit of European and North American consumers.

In contending with these paradoxical workings of power, Keeley took up a complicated position as an artist by developing approaches to art-making which reformulated critical discourses. She politicized the Embassy Hotel site by re-articulating histories of racialized oppression and resistance through which people asserted and protested hegemonic structures of power. While exploring subaltern narratives which examined experiences of marginalization within colonialist geographies, Keeley also re-envisioned the hotel building which functioned as a cultural community centre where differing constituencies interacted on a daily basis. Many of the tenants comprised men on welfare or old age pension who took up lodgings on the premises.

Resident, Brian Egerton moved into Room 31 where Keeley installed her work and retained his accommodation for a number of years. He was born in Toronto and relocated to London in 1984 where he took on the position of a carnival worker at the

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6 The research material I collected provides different dates for Egerton’s residency in Room 31. For instance Helen Haller indicates that he lived in the room from 1984 to 2000 (Haller 8). Meanwhile the press release accompanying Egerton’s exhibition at Embassy Hotel in 1991 suggests that he rented the premises from 1984 to 1986 (“Control-Data by Brian Egerton”, n. pag.).
Western Fairground. While maintaining his lodgings he displayed his own personal mementos in the room which included military and surveillance paraphernalia. Egerton subsequently participated in a solo exhibition in 1991 which opened to the public from 3 pm until 6 pm on January 21. The show included his installation CONTROL-DATA which he displayed in Room 33 directly beside the space where Keeley produced her work.

Egerton’s installation comprised radios, electronic devices, military manuals, reference books, military badges and national flags. In addition he displayed his own photos of the exhibitions and performances organized by the art collective, Embassy Cultural House (“Control-Data by Brian Egerton”, n. pag.; Geleynse 3). In producing the installation, he extended the themes and issues that Keeley explored in her piece. He was particularly interested in the military history of the Canadian Armed Forces and more specifically naval operations. Whereas he examined surveillance tactics developed by government regimes in North America, Keeley critiqued French imperialist systems of rule which formed part of colonialist expansion schemes. Egerton thus re-articulated the political aesthetics underlying Keeley’s work by exploring techniques and apparatuses of war which reinforced existing structures of power. He re-interpreted her piece by incorporating his own personal memorabilia into the display which added another layer of

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7 As a child Egerton was a member of the Boy Scouts and then later the Air Cadets (“Control-Data by Brian Egerton”, n. pag.). Hassan also indicates that he served as Second Lieutenant with the Canadian Armed Forces (Hassan, “Shelagh Keeley”, 5).

8 I collected information regarding Egerton’s exhibition display from Hassan’s untitled lecture for the Open Forum, Planning: Power, Politics, and People held at the Dia Art Foundation, New York on May 16, 1989. Hassan does not identify the specific military artifacts that Egerton incorporated into the installation and I was unable to find additional documentation which offers further details on the objects he collected.

9 I retrieved research material on Egerton’s installation, CONTROL-DATA (1991) from the exhibition press release and the accompanying photographs. In consulting these sources, I was unable to identify the specific books, badges and flags that he collected. All archival documents are contained in the Embassy Cultural House Archives, Ivey Family London Room, London Public Library, London, Ontario.
meaning onto the installation. This subversion speaks to the contradictions surrounding critical aesthetics which intervened in city spaces.

In creating installations at Embassy Hotel, artists located their works in an urban site where economically disenfranchised tenants took up lodgings. The building provided affordable housing for residents whom corporate and government organizations marginalized by gentrifying city neighborhoods. The resulting increase in property values forced out people living in poverty who could not afford the inflated rental costs. Thus the disruptive politics underlying site specific practices took on particular significance within the context of relocation schemes in the downtown core. Artists participated in antagonistic public spheres where diverse ethno-cultural and socio-economic classes re-formulated practices of radical democracy. Through these contestations residents and workers de-legitimated and re-legitimated city districts by facilitating acts of dissent in local neighborhoods. Artists thus came up against opposing ideological discourses from community activism to urban governance which served different goals and objectives, thus bringing into focus the competing trajectories surrounding the social, cultural and political production of space.

**Allyson Mitchell’s Re-articulation of Lesbian Feminist Aesthetics**

Allyson Mitchell similarly disrupted urban geographies through her installation at Gladstone Hotel. She undermined patriarchal and heterosexist institutions which reinforced inhibitive gender norms. She re-articulated lesbian feminist aesthetics by addressing four overlapping themes: Do It Yourself (DIY) politics that focused on community participation; queer theories that reformulated sexual scripts by asserting lesbian identities; countercultural practices that challenged beauty ideals and explored concepts of the female abject; and fat activism that promoted positive body images of
plus sized women. In addressing these issues, Mitchell gave voice to subaltern subjects who took up marginalized positions in mainstream culture. She radicalized the hotel space as a site of creative and critical intervention by politicizing the public urban realm, thus making visible excluded gendered and sexualized identities.

In producing installations at Gladstone Hotel Mitchell supported local collectives by following DIY politics which enabled people to engage in creative projects. Mary Celeste Kearney connects DIY activism with third wave feminism which disrupted hegemonic discourses. She argues that these groups opposed corporate organizations which owned publishing, recording, and production companies. Women critiqued the exclusionist systems of power surrounding the creative industry which adhered to codes of professionalism by maintaining costly facilities and resources. They resisted mainstream media by creating cheap and low tech products including ‘zines, music and film (Kearney 54-56, 59-64, 70-82).

According to Kearney DIY activists participated in community based projects organized by amateur writers, musicians and filmmakers who developed networks of support through workshops, conferences, performances and concerts. Whereas corporations operated according to hierarchical structures of control, artists followed collective and consensual approaches to cultural production. They facilitated countercultural movements by establishing alternative exhibition, performance and distribution venues (Kearney 54-55, 68-70). Creative communities empowered women by allowing them to take ownership over cultural practices. They disrupted capitalist markets which established women as passive consumers and engaged in acts of self representation which provided them with a sense of agency (Kearney 56-68).
Although DIY activists engaged in counter-hegemonic practices, they negotiated commercial and government infrastructures in circulating and distributing cultural goods and services. Kearney argues that people networked with professionals in their fields in order to facilitate cultural production and consumption. They not only advertised events through radio, television and magazines, but they also produced goods for sale and purchase in stores where they reached a wider audience (Kearney 68-82). Creative communities resisted corporate bureaucracies by taking ownership over cultural production yet they also required the facilities and resources provided by business and government organizations in order to continue creating art, music, films and ‘zines (Kearney 62-64, 68-69).

Allyson Mitchell contended with this paradox by engaging in DIY practices with other artists at Gladstone Hotel. The hotel catered to the tourist industry and functioned as a commercial business in consumer market economies. In organizing film screenings, exhibitions and performances on the premises, artists promoted, advertised and circulated their works to local and visiting audiences. They networked with colleagues and associates thus extending their personal and professional affiliations. Through these processes of exchange they gained access to gallery institutions, granting agencies and studio workshops. They negotiated the social, political and economic infrastructure surrounding cultural production and consumption by participating in community formations.

By organizing exhibitions at the hotel, artists established connections with various companies and firms in the surrounding neighborhood. For example, Allyson Mitchell worked with carpenters and designers when she created site specific works in the building. In acquiring the materials for her studio practice, Mitchell developed rapport
with people who owned commercial establishments. She thus worked in creative and consumer economies which served different goals and purposes. Mitchell engaged in processes of exchange with painters, sculptors, filmmakers and designers who followed collaborative approaches to art-making. She also negotiated what Kearney refers to as the “government and corporate infrastructures” which included granting agencies, business associations and tourist industries (Kearney 70). Mitchell took up a paradoxical position by working both with and against commodity markets which comprised production, distribution and exhibition centres where artists developed contacts with people in their field of professions.

More specifically Mitchell developed connections with queer collectives who organized programs of events at the Gladstone Hotel. These groups included gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and transsexual members who worked through differing agendas in coordinating activities on the premises. In her theoretical writing, Mitchell examines the competing aims and objectives of the varying constituencies involved with the queer community. She argues that they contended with multiple and at times conflicting perspectives and points of view by exploring complex subjectivities through which people re-articulated sexualized and gendered identities (Mitchell and Karaian 73-75). These articulatory practices were further complicated by the positioning of neighborhood collectives in the Gladstone Hotel which served as a meeting place for diverse constituencies.

Hotel manager, Christina Zeidler opened up the building to the queer community, yet she also evicted the low income tenants who previously inhabited the premises. She negotiated politics of contestation through which residents asserted and protested property rights and ownership. In addressing the needs of the hotel clients and patrons, she both
enabled and disenabled social formations by changing the function and purpose of the architectural site. She re-envisioned public urban space by facilitating processes of belonging and unbelonging between and among the differing collectives who inhabited the building. It is precisely through and against these complex workings of power that I examine Allyson Mitchell’s creative projects at Gladstone Hotel.

Mitchell describes her work in relation to radical feminist politics by discussing her commitment to “deep lez” theories and practices which focused on female queer identities (Mitchell, "Deep Lez Statement", n. pag.). Her concept of a feminist separatist commune recalls Adrienne Rich’s writing on lesbian continuum. According to Rich patriarchal society established queer sexuality as deviant thus resulting in the exclusion of women centred narratives from the historical canon. Rich engages in revisionist interpretations by re-reading texts which explored female identificatory experiences (648-660). She develops theories on lesbian continuum and describes different levels of female bonding from sexual partnerships to personal friendships. Rich examines the “nascent feminist political content” of lesbian writings in the context of institutionalized heterosexuality (659). She establishes radical feminism as a strategy of resistance which subverted and disrupted social, cultural and economic institutions.

Luce Irigaray similarly explores female erotic desires in her analysis of women’s sexuality. She discusses phallocentric discourses which stressed the importance of penal pleasures, thus reinforcing the primacy of male sexual desire. Irigaray proposes that the female other took on a subsidiary position by serving as the passive receptor for male erotic gratification. She critiques theories of the gaze which objectified women and presented the female body as a projection of male sexual fantasies (24-26). She disrupts paradigms of visualization by examining female corporeal and sensorial processes. She
describes the act of touching, stroking and caressing which stimulated tactile and visceral responses throughout the body. Irigaray describes women’s sexuality as multiple and diffuse, and establishes erotic desires as a source of female pleasure (28-30).

Working within this queer feminist framework, Allyson Mitchell engaged in practices of radical dissent. She participated in what Doreen Massey and Rosalyn Deutsche refer to as politics of contestation by destabilizing patriarchal institutions (Deutsche, “Agoraphobia”, 278-290; Massey, For Space, 149-162, 180-187). In developing critical aesthetics she gave voice to the “female other” thus reclaiming urban space for queer subjects who society marginalized and excluded. Mitchell re-articulated acts of identification and dis-identification through which women gained and lost visibility in the public sphere. In creating installations at Gladstone Hotel, she politicized the architectural site by exploring lesbian imagery which disrupted cultural codes and conventions.

Mitchell deconstructed and reconstructed representations of femininity through her site specific work Faux Naturelle (2005) which she exhibited in room 304 of the hotel (Figure 34). The installation included a fun fur tapestry which depicted nude women of differing sizes and skin tones, who danced, walked, climbed, sat and lay down among rocks, trees and grass. In completing the wall hanging, Mitchell re-conceptualized processes of female subjectivity by queering heterosexuality through interventionist

10 While referencing radical lesbian theories, Mitchell questioned the exclusionism underlying separatist feminism. Radical feminists included predominantly white middle class women who attended university and college where they gained insight into existing structures of knowledge and power. They assumed a position of privilege while ignoring the differences in race, class and sexuality which people negotiated within and across varying social, political and economic contexts. By contrast Mitchell developed networks of support with differing sexualized and racialized communities through her art-making practices.

11 In addition to the tapestry, Mitchell decorated the room with wallpaper which she purchased from a design company. The room also included: a wood desk and shelving unit created by a local carpenter; bedside tables and headboard designed by artist, Deanne Lehtinen; and hanging lamp shades which Mitchell purchased from a neighborhood store (Mitchell, Personal Interview, 3-4).
strategies which destabilized regimes of spectacularity. She re-appropriated playboy cartoons from the 1970s which traditionally served male audiences (Mitchell, Personal Interview, 5-6). She re-articulated lesbian sexual desires and re-contextualized media images of women by establishing pornography as a source of female erotic pleasure.

The original playboy cartoon showed two men watching a group of nude women in a landscape setting. Mitchell removed one of the male voyeurs and transformed the other one into a female satyr (Mitchell, Personal Interview, 5) (Figure 35). The figure
looked down and out toward the onlooker, thus disturbing the field of vision by taking on the same position as the audience who viewed the work. Mitchell thus disrupted what Luce Irigaray refers to as the “scoptophilic lens” which established women as the objectified other (Irigaray 26). Further she destabilized modes of visualization by incorporating fabrics into her work which appealed to the sense of touch.

Mitchell used thick tufts of fur for the women’s hair and smooth, velvety material for their torsos and limbs. She combined red, orange, grey and cream fabrics which depicted differing skin tones. The women blended into and stood out against the background scenery which Mitchell created from textured materials. She used rich, deep tones of green, brown, beige and ochre for the trees, grass, earth, rocks and stones. She placed the female figures in the fore, middle and background and positioned them in different locations in the landscape. She thus opened up the field of representation by tracing out a series of haptic movements across the surface of the fabric which marked out the bodily surfaces of the women pictured in the textural image.

Mitchell showed the female figures in the round with light and shadow playing across their arms, legs, torsos, breasts and buttocks. They not only projected backward and forward in space, but they also moved up, down and sideways along the picture plane. The switch between three-dimensional and two-dimensional space carried through in the textural design of the material fabric. The tufts of fur resembled brushstrokes which traced out rhythmic lines along the surface of the cloth further enhancing the pictorial composition. These surface affects and movements explored diffuse erogenous zones within and across the female body. Mitchell represented liminal spaces where women touched, caressed and stroked each other with their limbs and torsos intertwined. Their
bodies merged together, thus blurring the boundaries between self and other, subject and object.

Figure 35. Allyson Mitchell, Faux Naturelle, 2005 (detail); fun fur tapestry, Room 304, Gladstone Hotel, Toronto. Photograph by author. 20 January 2008.

In exploring lesbian sexual desires, Mitchell also played with concepts of the female abject in various works which she produced from 2005 onward. Her installation,
Faux Naturelle (2005) included the image of a satyr and connected to her exhibition, Sasquatch Clutch which she organized in Room 207 at Gladstone Hotel in 2005.\textsuperscript{12} The show included sculptures, wall hangings and rugs which represented female sasquatches with multiple teats, clawed hands and fanged teeth. Mitchell applied fun fur to their torsos, limbs and faces, thus creating hybrid monsters which changed from human to animal form (Figure 36). The sasquatches deviated from norms of femininity and represented what Mary Russo describes as acts of transgression (61). In her book on the female grotesque, Russo explores the etymology of the word “grotto-ese” which refers to the earthly, material and visceral. She describes the process of abjection which provided an example of the disorderly body which continually underwent transformation, thus destabilizing gendered identities (1-6, 10-13).

Russo explores the ways in which the female transgressor functioned as a demystifying or utopian model (61). She analyzes the counter-production of meaning through subcultural practices which destabilized existing codes and conventions. She suggests that the female grotesque parodied, mimicked and distorted feminine behaviours and mannerisms by establishing gender performance as a site of display. The abject other presented femininity as a masquerade, thus opening up gender representations to subversive re-interpretations (Russo 61-71). In developing theories on the female grotesque, Russo borrows from Julia Kristeva’s writings on abjection.

\textsuperscript{12} Mitchell organized the exhibition for the Toronto Alternative Art Fair International which took place at both the Gladstone Hotel and the Drake Hotel in November 2005 (Toronto Alternative Art Fair International, n. pag.). She previously exhibited the sasquatch sculptures at the Paul Petro Contemporary Art Gallery in Toronto from September to October, 2005.

Kristeva discusses concepts of jouissance and laughter which disrupted the social order by exploring non-meaning. She equates jouissance with the maternal body which
signified the dissolution of subjectivity. Mothering represented a narcissistic crisis leading toward the loss of self as the subject rejected and negated the maternal other in order to gain entry into society. Kristeva describes primal repressions including uninhibited sexuality traditionally associated with femininity. She discusses literature which focused on the maternal body and examines texts which distorted and perverted existing systems of language and meaning. This form of poetic carthasis emphasized the affects, gaps and breaks in acts of signification, thus disrupting existing writing practices (Kristeva 9-17, 26-27).

It is precisely this concept of abjection that Allyson Mitchell explored in her sculptures of the female sasquatch. She subverted mainstream culture by focusing on images of the marginalized other. Traditionally the sasquatch is male, but Mitchell reinvented this mythological figure as the female grotesque. Depicted as large, voluptuous giantesses who strutted and strode with legs and arms swinging back and forth, they disrupted disciplinary mechanisms which inhibited and restricted women’s actions and movements. They parodied and mimicked gender performances thus revealing femininity as a guise which remained open to subversive play. Replicating acts of dragging, Mitchell established gender representations as a site of spectacle and display through which the female imaginary took on new meaning. She brought into prominence the abject other who society excluded and repudiated.

Mitchell de-legitimated and re-legitimated the hotel space by giving voice to subaltern discourses. She disrupted hegemonic systems of power by exploring lesbian feminist aesthetics which undermined existing beauty ideals. She engaged in critical intervention and participated in antagonistic public spheres. Mitchell re-articulated structures of inclusion and exclusion through which people asserted and contested
sexualized and gendered identities. She reformulated the geo-politics of belonging and unbelonging by facilitating creative/queer activism in the hotel building. She challenged the social and cultural production of space through her site specific practices which undermined patriarchal and heterosexist ideologies.13

Mitchell further developed political aesthetics by engaging in performances with the queer fat activist group Pretty, Porky and Pissed Off (PPPO), which she co-founded with Ruby Rowan and Mariko Tamaki in 1996.14 They produced ‘zines, organized street theatre, coordinated workshops and participated in demonstrations which critiqued negative images of fat people in the media. Mitchell discusses the mandate of PPPO in her academic writing and argues that fat women negotiated changing subject positions through cultural activism. She explores fat corporeographies15 across differing geographic scales from the home to the nation state. She suggests that national health policies on obesity impacted upon familial spaces where people decided when, how much and what to eat (Mitchell, "Corporeographies of Size", 55-67).

Mitchell proposes that individuals monitored and surveyed their bodies by conforming to normative standards which determined what was and what was not

13 In addition to her installations at Gladstone Hotel, Mitchell produced lesbian feminist graffiti by painting over top of the billboards displayed throughout the city (Mitchell, "The Writing's on the Wall", 224-228). Whereas corporate organizations took ownership over urban sectors by posting advertisements on buildings, Mitchell engaged in countercultural practices by creating graffiti which served as a means of communication between and among the queer community. In her academic work she suggests that the images and writings marked out the surrounding space by giving voice to marginalized subjects, thus changing people’s sense of identity and belonging in the neighborhood (Mitchell, "The Writing's on the Wall", 222-224, 228-230).
14 According to Natasha Pinterics the collective later expanded to include Lisa Ayuso, Gillian Bell, Joanne Huffa, Abi Slone, Tracy Tidgwell, and Zoe Whittall. They remained active as a group for 8 years and disbanded in 2004 (qtd in Mitchell, "Corporeographies of Size", 82).
15 Mitchell’s concept of corporeographies refers to the political locations of embodied subjectivities within particular social and historical contexts. She argues that “where a subject [was] placed (geographically, socially, politically, economically) [could] have an enormous effect on what the possibilities [were] for the subject . . . “ (Mitchell, “Corporeographies of Size”, 55-56). Mitchell indicates that embodied subjectivities intervened in social and material processes by taking up differing positionalities within and across various geographic scales (Mitchell, “Corporeographies of Size”, 54-71).
acceptable. She discusses the ways in which the fat subject located herself in urban space by negotiating “where her body belong[ed] and d[id] not and how the space of her body w[ould] or w[ould] not ‘fit’ into spaces” (Mitchell, "Corporeographies of Size", 68).

These disciplinary mechanisms reinforced systems of power by granting and denying women access to public city sites. By inhabiting urban localities differing subjects rearticulated practices of identification and dis-identification. People engaged in processes of embodiment which affected the ways in which they experienced space on a physical, emotional and psychical level.

According to Mitchell the members of PPPO disrupted oppressive regimes of body surveillance by participating in acts of recovery and resistance. They not only critiqued negative representations of fatness in the media, but they also explored alternative images which celebrated large sized women (Mitchell, "Corporeographies of Size", 82-88). They established a safe and supportive environment where women fought back against discriminatory practices which excluded and repressed fat people. PPPO developed strategies of resistance in order to deal with the pain and shame they experienced in contending with phobic attitudes toward fatness. In examining the objectives of PPPO, Mitchell proposes that the members of the collective worked through changing subject positions by engaging in critical interventions in city neighborhoods. She argues that “these spaces [were] celebratory and resistant in that they evoke[d] an alternative from the mainstream and/or positive images of fat queer sexuality and subjectivities” (Mitchell, "Corporeographies of Size", 88).

The PPPO collective took on specific meaning in the context of Gladstone Hotel where they staged performances for the patrons and customers who visited the premises. They prepared, consumed and shared food with participating audiences, thus disrupting
dieting regimes which restricted women’s eating practices. They facilitated politics of radical dissent in the downtown core by taking ownership over the city streets and raising awareness around body issues. They intervened in the social production of space by engaging in what Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe refer to as “oppositional movements” which re-articulated internal and external power relations (Laclau and Mouffe 139). In addition to negotiating personal and political affiliations within the collective, they contended with the multiple and at times conflicting publics who attended the events they organized. They formed part of a marginalized constituency who gained prominence in the Gladstone Hotel by engaging in countercultural practices.

By coordinating performances with PPPO, Allyson Mitchell participated in creative interventions. These critical aesthetics also informed her installations, Sasquatch Clutch (2005) and Faux Naturelle (2005) which similarly presented empowering images of fat women. Her works re-inscribed lesbian feminist practices by enacting transgressive politics on several different levels. First, she re-articulated queer theories which explored changing sexualized and gendered identities. Second, she analyzed processes of abjection which brought into focus excluded and repudiated female subjects. Third, she subverted beauty norms by re-imagining body ideals to incorporate plus sized women. In facilitating these tactics of resistance, Mitchell re-envisioned sensorial and corporeal geographies by examining female identificatory experiences which traversed the emotional, physical and psychical.

Mitchell radicalized the hotel space through her site specific works which re-scripted subaltern discourses and undermined hegemonic ideologies. Her performances and installations took on contradictory meanings for the communities who lived, worked and socialized in the surrounding neighborhood. She enabled social formations by
facilitating queer fat activism, thus destabilizing geo-politics of marginalization which established lesbian women as the female other. She also redesigned the hotel interior thus contributing to the building renovations which precipitated the displacement of the low income tenants who previously rented lodgings on the premises. In refurbishing the hotel, the building manager Christina Zeidler relocated the longstanding residents to alternate accommodations, thus dissolving community affiliations. She participated in city revitalization which resulted in increased property values, thus pushing out people living in poverty.

The history of the hotel intersected gentrification processes which negatively impacted economically disenfranchised communities. By producing and exhibiting art at Gladstone Hotel, Allyson Mitchell contended with urban renewal schemes. She disrupted the architectural site and opened up the hotel space to interventionist strategies by carrying through the objectives and mandates of Christina Zeidler who removed the former residents from the building, thus foreclosing their participation in creative projects. Ironically, Mitchell’s installation *Faux Naturelle* (2005) incorporated kitsch furnishings and accessories, and referenced trash culture which people traditionally associated with low income communities. Yet this very same social class disappeared from the hotel when artists occupied the premises by engaging in cultural production. This paradox underlay critical aesthetics in urban space where people contested and asserted politics of belonging and unbelonging. Within this context, site specific practices

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16 Mitchell furnished the room at Gladstone Hotel with wood paneling, shag carpet and fake stone wallpaper. The interior design resembled a basement recreational room and imitated the home decor of socially marginalized communities. For instance her installation recalled the set designs for the Canadian television sitcom, *The Trailer Park Boys*. Mitchell thus referenced trash culture which contrasted with the hip and trendy urban scene of Queen Street West where the hotel is located.
re-inscribed antagonistic public spheres in ways that both consolidated and challenged geographies of power.

The politicization of aesthetics thus intersected the spatialization of community politics through which neighborhood collectives redefined the boundaries and limits of city districts. Artists negotiated competing ideological discourses including business mandates, government policies and cultural activism which granted and denied residents access to knowledge structures, theoretical disciplines and institutional affiliations within and across urban localities. It is precisely these discursive systems of power which complicate readings of installation art by revealing the uneasy push and pull between the differing constituencies who inhabited the hotel sites where artists located their works. Negotiating changing subject positions, they contended with the varying interests and agendas of the people who reformulated politics of displacement, marginalization and disenfranchisement.
Chapter Six: Conclusion

Site Specific Practices and Gentrification

This dissertation locates site specific practices within the context of gentrification schemes which perpetuated what Neil Smith refers to as the “the class remake of the central landscape” (Smith, The New Urban Frontier, 39). According to Smith city revitalization reinforced the uneven distribution of wealth and power by separating upscale neighborhoods from urban slums. In facilitating cultural production and consumption in the downtown core, artists contributed to city development by taking up a complicated position in relationship to processes of urban restructuring which benefited middle class constituencies and negatively impacted people living in poverty. As low income earners, artists contended with the social inequities underlying city renewal by relocating to economically deprived neighborhoods where they developed community affiliations with local inhabitants. They rehabilitated and revived urban districts by opening up cultural centres, studio workshops, production facilities and exhibition galleries which served diverse constituencies.

Artists rejuvenated inner city cores, thus attracting professional developers and corporate organizations into the area. The resulting de-investment and re-investment in real estate markets proved detrimental for economically disenfranchised residents who landlords evicted from properties. These acts of entitlement and disentitlement revealed the growing class-divide between the rich and the poor within and across city regions where people asserted and protested tenancy rights. Artists participated in these power struggles by contesting government departments and business companies which controlled city planning. They opposed large scale building projects which resulted in the destruction of low cost housing thus restricting who gained access to urban sectors.
Development companies constructed architectural complexes which included office towers, boutiques and condominiums which served middle and high income earners at the exclusion of impoverished communities.

Artists intervened in the political and economic production of space by engaging in social movements and facilitating practices of radical dissent. More specifically they developed socially conscious approaches to art-making by exploring feminism, postcolonialism and queer activism which challenged gendered, racialized and sexualized oppression. Artists worked through competing ideologies by negotiating the changing interests and agendas of differing ethno-cultural and socio-economic communities who inhabited urban regions. While re-articulating identity formations through these exchanges they reconfigured personal and professional affiliations which granted and denied people access to city districts. It is precisely these complex socio-spatial processes which I examine in analyzing site specific exhibitions at Embassy Hotel, Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel. In producing installations on the premises, creative communities responded to the multiple needs of the owners, patrons and staff who made claims to urban localities by inhabiting the surrounding neighborhood.

These acts of legitimization revealed the tensions and contradictions underlying urban degeneration and regeneration which occurred to different degrees in the city sectors where artists engaged in cultural production. Whereas Embassy Hotel was situated in East London, Ontario which experienced an economic downturn during the 1980s and 1990s, Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel are located on Queen Street West in Toronto which underwent revitalization from the 1980s to 2000s. Urbanization in these city regions impacted the people who lived, worked and socialized at the hotels where creative communities organized exhibition and performance programs. Whereas the manager of
Embassy Hotel continued to provide low income residents with affordable lodgings, the proprietors of Cameron House and Gladstone Hotel evicted the longstanding tenants in order to open up the rental spaces to artists who renovated the architecture, thus attracting an expanding clientele. In occupying the buildings, creative communities impacted the lives of the building inhabitants who either remained on the premises where they came into contact with artists or they relocated to alternate lodgings as the owners reconstructed the architecture.

Artists disrupted the hotel space by contending with the conflicting interests and agendas of the residents and staff for whom the buildings took on contradictory meanings. In some instances the proprietors accommodated the patrons by making the lodgings more inhabitable through art exhibitions which enhanced the interior décor. In other cases the building managers alienated the tenants by redesigning the architecture in accordance with aesthetic criteria which aligned with the goals of gentrification. Within this context, site specific practices facilitated socio-spatial processes which consolidated, marginalized and displaced the communities who lived in the surrounding neighborhood. Artists produced creative spaces where antagonistic publics gained and lost visibility by re-articulating the geo-politics of urban renewal. These revitalization schemes carried through the objectives of government mandated reforms which determined the scope and parameter of residential neighborhoods, cultural corridors, heritage sectors and business centres.

Municipal departments worked in tandem with corporate organizations in defining city planning policies which focused on the establishment of art boulevards and historic districts. Policy writers reinforced integrationist approaches by centralizing cultural production in urban regions which they identified as spaces of economic and political
power. Further they described the preservation and conservation of heritage properties in city sectors which underwent gentrification, thus perpetuating hegemonic practices of urbanization. The galleries, museums, shops, boutiques and restaurants situated in these locales provided goods and services for middle and high income patrons. These clients engaged in leisure time activities in order to gain social status thus further perpetuating class distinctions which separated the cultural elite from the masses. By producing installations in hotel buildings artists both perpetuated and disrupted capitalist markets which turned city neighborhoods into tourist spectacles for the pleasures of visiting audiences who proclaimed their class privilege by participating in urbane lifestyles.

In redecorating the hotel interiors and exteriors, creative communities responded to the business mandates of the building owners who expanded their facilities by enabling cultural production and consumption. The buildings combined recreational venues with residential accommodations and functioned as both tourist establishments and community centres. In creating works on the premises artists negotiated the push and pull between commerce and culture by meeting the needs of the clientele who comprised local and visiting customers. The proprietors promoted the local art scene through exhibitions and performances, thus supporting artists, musicians, theatre professionals and filmmakers who attracted tourists into the area. By producing and displaying site specific works in the hotels, artists connected with their peers and mentors who founded parallel galleries, video collectives, craft associations, art councils and design firms. They engaged in critical aesthetics by participating in dialogic exchanges with their colleagues who experimented with technical processes and conceptual approaches.

By developing these networks of rapport they acquired information regarding funding agencies, gallery openings and workshop studios. They accessed material
resources, institutional departments, theoretical disciplines and knowledge structures by
meeting with critics, curators and dealers at the hotels. Creative communities re-inscribed
contemporary art discourse through these interactions which impacted how and why they
produced, distributed and circulated their works. In coordinating installation exhibitions
at the hotels, they reformulated collective politics. They de-legitimated and re-legitimated
socio-spatial practices through which people re-envisioned urban geographies. Artists
reinforced particular ways of living and thinking by participating in social movements
which challenged and undermined hegemonic discourses. They implicated themselves in
local acts of struggle by creating installations at hotels which became sites of contention
as owners and residents confronted gentrification processes.

In some instances the tenants re-interpreted the works, thus participating in art
production which extended into the spaces where residents engaged in everyday
interactions with other patrons. In other cases, the works alienated the customers who the
owners removed from the premises, thus preventing them from joining in the cultural
events and activities organized by artists. Creative communities changed the function and
design of the hotels in ways that both included and precluded the existing clientele. In
refurbishing the architectural décor, artists enabled and disenabled participatory processes
by opening up and foreclosing the possibility of creative interaction. They produced what
Michel Foucault refers to as heterotopias by representing, contesting and inverting the
architectural sites (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", 24). These disruptive practices took on
controversial meaning in the context of urban renewal which perpetuated class disparities
in city regions.

Creative communities politicized hotel spaces through countercultural movements
which gave voice to subaltern subjects who opposed racist, sexist and homophobic
ideologies. Yet they also marginalized people living in poverty who contended with processes of displacement as artists occupied the downtown core by opening up production and distribution centres. The paradox underlying critical aesthetics reveals the uneasy push and pull between creative activism and urban revitalization which both empowered and dis-empowered people. By producing hotel installations artists perpetuated and subverted gentrification which resulted in the rejuvenation of city districts.

Artists reformulated processes of identification, dis-identification, belonging and unbelonging through which people staked claims to local neighborhoods. In exhibiting site specific works in hotels, they came up against the competing trajectories surrounding the social, political and economic production of space. They reconfigured discursive formations by establishing the downtown core as a site of radical dissent. They disrupted antagonistic public spheres where residents and workers resisted conformist policies which perpetuated urban renewal thus resulting in the polarization of social classes in city regions. Artists engaged in counter-hegemonic practices by undermining hierarchical structures of governance which regulated neighborhood districts. Working with and against broader socio-spatial processes, they altered the symbolic and historical meanings of city spaces, thus re-imagining urban geographies as sites of creative and critical intervention.
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Appendix A
Architectural plans, first floor, Embassy Hotel, ca. 1980
Appendix A
Architectural plans, second floor, Embassy Hotel, ca. 1980
### Appendix A1

#### List of Permanent Installations, Embassy Hotel

**1984-1990**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelagh Keeley</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Photographs, pigment, wax, graphite, pencil</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Room 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth McKenzie</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Graphite</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Merritt</td>
<td>Personal Values</td>
<td>Photograms</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Room 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert McNealy</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Photographs, paint, stencil, pigment, found objects, wallpaper</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Second floor hallway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Hurlbut</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Tree column, wood base and capital</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Beaver Room Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Fernandes</td>
<td>No Sphere</td>
<td>Paint, wall engraving, hand written text</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Room 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Diane Day</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Ceramic tiles, paint, glazes, light fixtures</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz Magor</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Wall mounted photograph</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Stairwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob McKaskell</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Wood staining, metal staining, baseboard</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Incinerator, doorway and Second floor room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lani Maestro with assistance of Mark Favro</td>
<td>Waters of Lethe</td>
<td>Photographs, shelving units, salt, door engraving</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Second floor room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>José Bedia</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Wall mural</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Front façade of hotel building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>María Magdelena Campos with assistance of Geard Cut Stone Ltd.</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Cut stone pieces, wall paintings</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Second floor room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Egerton</td>
<td>Control Data</td>
<td>Radios, electronic devices, military manuals, military badges, flags, photographs</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Room 33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix B

**List of Permanent Installations, Cameron House**  
1981-1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Artists</th>
<th>Affiliate Artists/Designers</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sybil Goldstein</td>
<td>Faux marbling by Hugh Poole with installation assistance provided by Eugene Metzai</td>
<td>Bacchanal</td>
<td>Acrylic paint, shelving paper, canvas</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Dean</td>
<td>This is Paradise</td>
<td>Spray paint, stencil</td>
<td>ca. 1983</td>
<td>Bar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napoleon Brousseau</td>
<td>Ten Ants</td>
<td>Corrugated steel, cement, gaffing tape, newspaper, wire coat hangers, fiberglass, paint</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Front façade of hotel building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline Choi</td>
<td>Bather</td>
<td>calcium carbonate pigment, powder pigment, glue</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Second floor bathroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne Todd, Sheila Alexander, Elizabeth McKenzie, Pete Dakao, Gar Smith, Brian Burnett, Alan Glicksman and Rae Johnson (?)</td>
<td>untitled</td>
<td>Wall mural</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Side façade of hotel building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C
Architectural plans, ground floor, Gladstone Hotel, ca. 2005
Appendix C
Architectural plans, second floor, Gladstone Hotel, ca. 2005
Appendix C
Architectural plans, third floor, Gladstone Hotel, ca. 2005
Appendix C
Architectural plans, forth floor, Gladstone Hotel, ca. 2005
### Appendix C1
List of Artist Designed Rooms, Gladstone Hotel
2005-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Designer</th>
<th>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Celeste Toogood (Textile Designer and Printmaker) &amp; Christopher Martin (Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sky Gazer</td>
<td>Wall reliefs, textile designs, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Harwood (Multimedia Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Biker Room</td>
<td>Poster, magazine cut outs, furniture, lighting fixtures, rugs, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruckus (Textile Design Company owned by Kate Austin &amp; Kristin Ledgett)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Red Room</td>
<td>Handmade textiles, display boxes, furniture, lighting fixtures, rugs, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allyson Mitchell (Installation Artist and Filmmaker)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Faux Naturelle</td>
<td>Fun fur tapestry, furniture, faux rock wallpaper, lighting fixtures, carpeting, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia Berkovic (Installation Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teen Queen</td>
<td>Collage, wallpaper, furniture, light fixtures, bedspread, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C1
### List of Artist Designed Rooms, Gladstone Hotel
#### 2005-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Designer</th>
<th>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Koma Designs</td>
<td>Janelle Guthrie (Textile Designer), Brothers Dressler (Furniture Designers), Sodi Designs (Furniture Design Company)</td>
<td>Urban Voyageur</td>
<td>Feltwork, wood lattice, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Note Jamie Cheveldeyoff incorporated his designs into an already existing Artist Designed Room completed by Paul Fortin in 2005</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Steele</td>
<td></td>
<td>Map Room</td>
<td>Maps, wall reliefs, hanging mobile, line drawing, video, furniture, lighting fixtures</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix C1
**List of Artist Designed Rooms, Gladstone Hotel**
*2005-2006*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Designer</th>
<th>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maison St. Pierre: Tim Friesen (Furniture Designer), D’Arcy St. Pierre (Clothing Designer) &amp; Patrick Lightheart (Graphic Designer and Photographer)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Queen Suite on Queen Street</td>
<td>Wall painting, found objects, furniture, light fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Levin (Textile Designer and Video Artist)</td>
<td>Lisa Dooher (Furniture Designer), Janna Levitt (Architect), Peter Gray (Furniture Upholsterer), Nas Khan (Video Technician), Aleesa Cohene (Video Editor)</td>
<td>Puzzle Room</td>
<td>Jigsaw puzzle collage, video, furniture, lighting accessories</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Zeidler (Designer)</td>
<td></td>
<td>“The Best”</td>
<td>Furniture, lighting fixtures, wallpaper, rugs, prints, drawings, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Agostinis (Furniture Designer/Maker) &amp; Joel Harrison-Off (Furniture Designer and Woodworker)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trading Post</td>
<td>Furniture, lighting fixtures, photographs, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix C1

**List of Artist Designed Rooms, Gladstone Hotel**  
**2005-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Designer</th>
<th>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Jones</td>
<td>(Furniture Designer) &amp; Joy Walker (Textile Designer)</td>
<td>Re: Fresh</td>
<td>Furniture, lighting fixtures, textile designs, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruno Billio</td>
<td>(Installation Artist and Designer)</td>
<td>Billio Room</td>
<td>Building elevation plan, string and tape installation, stacked furniture, draperies, lighting fixtures, rug</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suanne McGregor</td>
<td>(Artist)</td>
<td>Today Room</td>
<td>Wall mosaic, tin molding, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Berkowitz</td>
<td>(Industrial Designer) &amp; George Simionpoulos (Architect)</td>
<td>Flight316.ca</td>
<td>Wall mounted railing, wall mural, furniture, lighting fixtures, blinds</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julian Fenkel</td>
<td>(Printmaker)</td>
<td>Model Citizen</td>
<td>Mixed media prints, furniture, lighting fixtures, wallpaper, rugs</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C1
List of Artist Designed Rooms, Gladstone Hotel
2005-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Designer</th>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barr Gilmore (Graphic Designer) &amp; Michel Arcand (Interior Designer)</td>
<td>Periphere Uno (Furniture Manufacturing Company), Jasper Morrison (Industrial Designer), Kartell (Furniture and Lighting Design Company), Powell &amp; Bonnell (Furniture and Lighting Design Company), Artime (Lighting Design Company), Marant Construction Limited</td>
<td>Blue Line Room</td>
<td>Wall painting, line drawings, bedspread, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Campbell (Artist and Designer)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Furniture, print, photograph, lighting fixtures, rugs, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heidi Earnshaw (Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sugarbush</td>
<td>Wall engravings, wall reliefs, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rayne Baron (Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Echame Flores</td>
<td>Memory boxes, found objects, furniture, lighting fixtures, wallpaper, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C1
### List of Artist Designed Rooms, Gladstone Hotel 2005-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Designer</th>
<th>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sobule Design (Design company owned by Amy McLaughlin &amp; Aleksandr Niestroj)</td>
<td>Sawdust Custom Woodwork</td>
<td>Big Wood</td>
<td>Furniture, lighting fixtures, video, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Francis (Architect and Graphic Designer) in coordination with Big Stuff (Furniture Upholstering Company owned by Charlene &amp; Grant Gilmore)</td>
<td>David MacHenry (Furniture Designer), Bev Hisey (Textile Designer), Jay Turner (Paint Supplier), Queen West Antiques, Magasin Flair, Remnants Botanical, CDN Antler Designs, IG3 Printing Company, Metro Wallcoverings</td>
<td>Canadiana Room</td>
<td>Light benches, photography, furniture, lighting fixtures, wallpaper, wall paneling, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Designer</td>
<td>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Room No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corwyn Lund (Sculptor, Installation and Video Artist) &amp;</td>
<td>Orest Tataryn (Lighting Designer), Mark Wilson from MetalArt Studio (Metal Design Company), Edmond Joseph and Jan Marriott (Textile Designers), Gavin McDougall from Designer Glass Company, Reliable Interiors (Interior Design Company), Alison Chan (Textile Designer), Silva Custom Furniture (Furniture Design Company), Aristocrat Lamps (Lighting Company)</td>
<td>Parlour of Twilight</td>
<td>Tin ceiling, neon lighting, wall designs, furniture, blinds</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simone Moir (Performance, Video and Installation Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Collett (Printmaker and Ceramicist), Penelope Stewart (Installation Artist) &amp; Nicholas Stirling (Musician and Audio Engineer)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Racine</td>
<td>Audio recording, stacked suitcases, postcards, ceramic designs, textile designs, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladstone Hotel</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tower Suite</td>
<td>Furniture, lighting fixtures, rugs, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deanne &amp; Danny Lehtinen (Designers)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lehtinen Lodge</td>
<td>Furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C1
List of Artist Designed Rooms, Gladstone Hotel
2005-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Designer</th>
<th>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heather Dubbeldam (Architect and Photographer) &amp; Tania Ursomarzo (Architect, Artist and Designer)</td>
<td>Florin Dumitras from DDF European Design, Georg Unger from Kobi's Cabinets, Stan Trtanj from Modern Age Plastics, Stuart Samuels from Downtown Rug, Alex Dordijovski from BO Creative Steel, Onder Cakmakci from BCY Structural Engineer, Jonathon Bayer and Andrew Sebok from Jomar Electric, Michael Cheng from M + K Cabinet Architecture</td>
<td>Offset</td>
<td>Wood scaffolding, lighting design, furniture, rug, blinds</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Cruise (Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ambulation</td>
<td>Wall appliqués, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies, rug</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Palmer (Painter) and Melanie Zanker (Furniture Designer, Woodworker and Artist)</td>
<td>Combo Moderna</td>
<td>Wallpaper design, wall paintings, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>413</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Designer</td>
<td>Affiliate Designers/Manufacturing Companies</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Room No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruno Billio (Installation Artist and Designer) &amp; Day Millman (Video Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Walls Are Speaking</td>
<td>Wallpaper design, textile design, architectural drawings, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina Zeidler (Filmmaker)</td>
<td>Kent Aggus from Built Work Design (Furniture Designer Company)</td>
<td>Snapshot</td>
<td>Photomontage, furniture, blinds</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FELT (Felt Design Company founded by Kathryn Walter)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Felt Room</td>
<td>Wall coverings, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millie Chen (Installation and Performance Artist)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chinoiserie</td>
<td>Wallpaper design, furniture, lighting fixtures, rugs, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lolli Ursomarzo (Interior Designer) &amp; Daniel Riitano (Muralist and Decorative Painter)</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Nouveau Room</td>
<td>Wall painting, furniture, lighting fixtures, draperies</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D
List of Interviews

Embassy Hotel

Owner


Artists/Musician


Cameron House

Owners


Artists

Appendix D
List of Interviews


Gladstone Hotel

Manager


Artists


Collette, Susan. E-mail interview. 7 July 2007.


Stewart, Penelope. Telephone Interview. 5 March 2007.