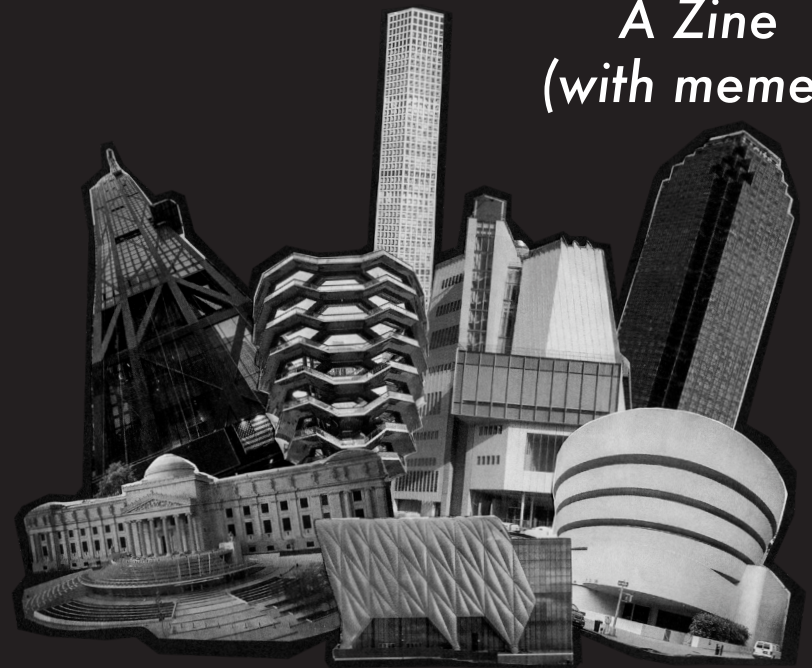


Art & Gentrification In The City

A Zine
(with memes)



Compiled & Edited By

Cristina Ferrigno

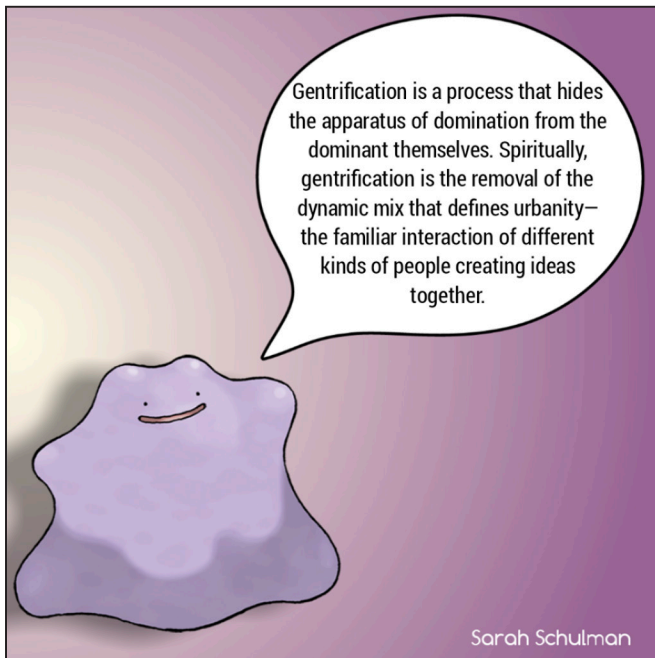
With contributions from
**Chloë Bass, Claire Bishop, Magali Duzant,
Shani Peters and Greg Sholette**

CC-BY-NC-SA
Free Online Download
www.cmferrigno.com/nyc

You can participate by taking
the Gentrification Survey!

I asked 5 NYC based artists to respond
to the following prompts:

- If your neighborhood has experienced gentrification, how has it intersected with the arts if at all?
- Is there a particular work or artist that subverts the dynamics of gentrification that you feel works especially well and why?
- What are your thoughts on the concept of younger, wealthier or more educated POC/Queer folks displacing folks in existing marginalized communities? --See concept of Gentrification. How has this informed your politics and/or practice?
- I often think about Sustainability in terms of lasting impact, how have your ideas lived on after you've physically left a place or community?



PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROJECT ONLINE!

Take the Gentrification Survey at
www.cmferigno.com/nyc

**LEARN MORE ABOUT LAND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

www.landacknowledgements.org

[www.decolonizethisplace.org/post/
guide-to-indigenous-land-and-
territorial-acknowledgements-for-
cultural-institutions](http://www.decolonizethisplace.org/post/guide-to-indigenous-land-and-territorial-acknowledgements-for-cultural-institutions)

**NATIVE ORGANIZATIONS TO
SUPPORT**

Honor The Earth
www.honorearth.org

**National Indigenous Women's
Resource Center**
www.niwrc.org

**International Indian Treaty
Council**
www.iitc.org

The Lenape Center
www.facebook.com/LenapeCenter

Idle No More
www.idlenomore.ca

Decolonize This Place
www.decolonizethisplace.org/

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
ANTI-GENTRIFICATION IN NYC**

**NYC ORGANIZATIONS TO
SUPPORT**

**Brooklyn Antigentrification
Network**
www.bangentrification.org

**Queens Anti Gentrification
Project**
www.queensantigentrification.org

Take Back the Bronx
www.bronxsocialcenter.org/about-us

No New Jails
www.nonewjails.nyc/followthemoney

Woodside on the Move
www.woodsideonthemove.org

Decolonize This Place
www.decolonizethisplace.org

Chinatown Art Birgade
www.chinatownartbrigade.org

Stop Sunnyside Yards
www.stopsunnysideyards.com

Free CUNY
www.free-cuny.org

Special Thanks to

Social Practice Queen at Queens College MFA, The Queens Museum,
Paul & Claire's *Public School* Class and NUMTOTs.

Featuring memes from Wokémon, NUMTOTs, echohegemony.com,
@ratedm, @la_meme_young, @the_shed_is_a_shack,
@contemporarycostanza and @elwingbling

Henry Brannan of NUMTOTs for the comprehensive *Gentrification
Reading List* and Cynthia Prisco for more memes and discourse.

Jess Guecha for advising and help on the language of the Land
Acknowledgement.

Land Acknowledgement

In New York City, we live on the unceded land of the Lenape peoples and for two centuries, slavery remained a significant part of New York life where white settlers bought and sold people of color. I ask you to join me in acknowledging the Lenape community, the Lenape community, and specifically the Carnarsie and the Nayack whose homelands have become Brooklyn. I want to acknowledge their elders both past and present and future generations as well as the black ancestors who were bought and sold at the auction stand as slaves.

I want to take a moment to recognize the violence, the effects of colonization and to remind folks that these aren't extinct cultures and this abhorrent history was really not that long ago. Native and indigenous peoples still exist all over the world, in the Americas and here in New York. Native people face very real, very pressing issues today, like water access, land rights, cultural and language loss, extreme violence against women and the separation of children from their tribes and heritage. This acknowledgement demonstrates a commitment to beginning the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism. I would like to share some resources and organizations that work towards these goals.

Check out the bibliography for this zine here:
www.cmferrigno.com/nyc

Table of Contents

What is Gentrification?	1
Neighborhood	3
<i>A Letter to the Vessel</i> - Elizabeth Schambelan . .	8
POC Bourgeoisie & Gentrification	10
Subverting the Dynamics	14
Sustainability	19
Conclusion	21
Land Acknowledgement	22
Resources	23



Shani Peters

Teach.

city: come over

property developer: I can't, the potential for windfall profit is too low

city: I just designated this working class neighborhood an arts district

developer:



(Hey, at least it looks like it's mixed-use)

In Conclusion?

I was going to write a conclusion but I feel like I'm just left with more questions...

How do I contribute to my community? How do I hold myself and others accountable for our complicity in the systems of gentrification? Since there's no ethical consumption under capitalism, is there a way to exist (especially as an artist) in this city without being part of the problem? What kind of legacy do I leave? How can we fight?

I guess my only true conclusion is that memes make everything better.

If you say you love culturally rich enclaves and diverse urban neighborhoods



DO MORE WORK TO

preserve and protect those communities, including by making sure your presence is not contributing to its destruction and displacement
- and staying out if it does

Magali Duzant

I often work in print, either making books or print ephemera that serve as manuals, guides, maps, poetic bits of research and the like. For me one of the most public forms of working is print work in the sense that it is distributable and can be done affordably. It can also be taken home, digested, referenced and more.

In terms of work that engages or addresses communities I have deeply mixed feelings. It can feel as if the arts and artists are trying to fill a gap that would be best served by actual government spending - on job training programs, expanded benefits programs and more. One of the biggest issues I see is the push to encourage artists to work in social practice forms by often exploiting the precarious nature of most artists professional lives - arts organizations may mean well but often find themselves picking up on "issues" as a way to increase donor support; grants, specifically ones that are generous, are often tied to community engagement projects encouraging artists to shift their focus to this sphere often without prior knowledge of working methods of the field or a deep enough understanding of communities (and some might say the humility of working with people). I say this as someone who has struggled with the delicate balance of working within predefined structures and new spaces. This - including my own successes and failures - has shaped much of the way I work currently and many of the questions I ask - is my voice needed, what might this work accomplish, who, what, and where are being impacted? It is one of the reasons I often work with personal narrative - it is what I can bring - and interview formats - it is what I can listen to. I think so much of this is still a work in progress but within this with enough thought, compassion, and criticality can come something quite wonderful.

What is Gentrification?

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Gentrification is "the process of repairing and rebuilding homes and businesses in a deteriorating area (such as an urban neighborhood) accompanied by an influx of middle-class or affluent people and that often results in the displacement of earlier, usually poorer residents."

While I think this definition is a good starting point, it does not encompass a lot of important facets of that process, a phenomena I first experienced as a teen growing up in a middle class neighborhood that quickly transformed. I grew up in Park Slope in the mid nineties, a neighborhood that is now only accessible to the upper class as renters, and to the super rich, as buyers. My parent's, Brooklynites by birth, had the brilliant luck of buying a brownstone off the Park in the mid-late 70's for an extremely reasonable price.

Gentrification is an important issue for me because 90's Park Slope and the stability of my childhood, holds a lot of nostalgia for me. In doing this project I've been able to formulate and organize some of my thoughts and feelings on gentrification and I can almost name them... as a kind of loss—a personal loss and a wider cultural loss. As an artist, I sometimes think art may be a way to process or heal from that grief, or actively fight against it, but on my more defeatist and cynical days I succumb to the knowledge that it is often art and the art world that feeds the cycle I wish to disrupt. The artist walks the line between class structures and politics, the artist can be subversive but art can also be commodified. The artist is used and disposed of by capitalist urban development through the means of "beautification." Even if we are aware of the power structures and wish to subvert them, our intent as artists doesn't negate our impact. I think I'd like to preface this collection of thoughts on the intersection of Art & Gentrification that we are all gentrifiers in one way or another, we are all existing on, living, buying and selling native land. I do not say this as to be divisive but to acknowledge

that very real fact and to even the playing field a little. That's not to say that I don't have gripes with Bushwick hipsters or bank executives in SoHo but I think the issues are both systematic and I do (optimistically) think that we as individuals *can do something* if we're aware of and care enough about the issue. So, that's essentially, that's my motivation in doing this project, to start a dialogue (or continue one previously started) in critiquing Art's complicity in the changing dynamics of the city in favor of the rich, the white and the educated-- and who do you think buys art?



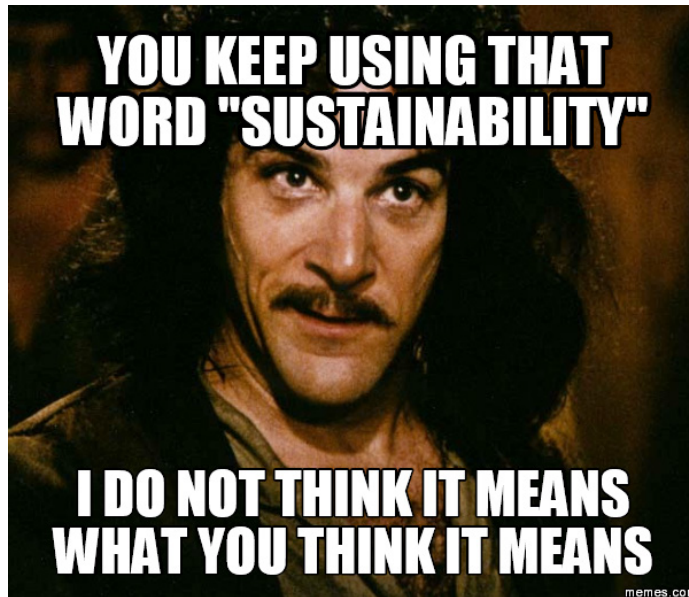
Sustainability

What exactly is sustainability? There is personal sustainability-- what you can endure and for how long, is it a marathon or a sprint? Financially sustainable-- how much, can I get a payment plan?? Environmental sustainability- what can the land take? Climate change and the anthropocene (also somehow tied inversely with real estate, why do they continue to build luxury condos on superfund sites and along flooding waterfronts?) invariably all these have some sort of breaking point, but where does it break down-- how and why?

But, I posed this question more in terms of sustainable impact on communities... I guess I should contextualize a little. I teach Girl Scouts and to get their Highest Awards (Gold and Silver) they must complete a couple of larger long-term research based projects that are in line with the concept of making the world a better place, along with a number of Journeys or Badges that each culminate in a Take Action Project, "a chance for girls to partner with others in their community to solve a problem. They learn about getting to the root causes of issues, mobilizing and engaging community members and volunteers, and striving toward creating lasting change in their world." I think that bit- right there, essentially embodies a lot of the ideals that Social Practice or Socially Engaged Art aspire to. So it's not a one-time solution, its that bit about "lasting change" that I find interesting, almost paradoxical. So I was curious and wanted to ask artists who take on a kind of "stewardship role" (alá the Queens Museum's Who Takes Care of New York exhibition), how does sustainability factor in?

I often think about Sustainability in terms of lasting impact, how have your ideas lived on after you've physically left a place or community?

Neighborhood



My experiences in seeing Park Slope transform puts me in a position to not be able to afford where I grew up, where my family still lives. In having to search for more affordable housing I've landed in Sunnyside, Queens where I've lived for the past 6 years. In Queens, we've faced what seems like high stakes development and intensive local politics; and I think an overall stronger anti-gentrification sentiment and a higher awareness of local issues from residents. There have been major progressive wins like the defeat of Goliath, aka, Amazon in neighboring LIC and the election of Alexandria Ocasio Cortez. We've also had losses, the defeat of Tiffany Cabán and the looming terror of Sunnyside Yards (pictured on the back cover)

Queens and Sunnyside also hold quite a few contradictions. A very progressive BID, a council member who is often a little too close with neoliberal development forces, local non-profit and community groups that in-fight amongst each other. It's been an interesting education, and I'm not 100% sure where I stand, as the ground continually seems to shift beneath us. My experience in Queens has brought about questions like "Can you work within the system to get things done?" "Is academia and theory a valid reason for speaking over/for long-term residents?" "Should I take advantage of opportunities afforded by not so savory benefactors, and where's that line?" So in trying to get down to the meat of it, I wanted to find out how other New York artists actively navigate these waters.

If your neighborhood has experienced gentrification, how has it intersected with the arts if at all?



Magali Duzant

I currently live in Forest Hills and have seen the neighborhood change though not in the same dynamics of other neighborhoods. It is for the most part a middle to upper middle class and affluent neighborhood, the changes have been demographic - younger people, more diversity, but have been much more level, not as drastic as in other areas of the city. I have had studio spaces and worked in Bushwick over the past 6 years and I've seen a huge shift in that neighborhood in all the textbook ways - rents have jumped (I lost 2 studios through the inability to pay for rent increases), art spaces have pushed in, and developers have occupied the neighborhood, forcing many long term residents to leave. Being an artist I see the need to recognize the fact that I have been a victim of gentrification but just as much, if not more, a perpetrator of it. Artists find cheap space in neighborhoods and pave the way for developers to cash in on caché.

Greg Sholette

The neighborhood I live in now only for the past decade or so -Inwood in upper Manhattan- has not been gentrified, though always appears on the cusp of that process. If it happens, and some predict it is coming soon, it will likely be the result of re-zoning by the Mayor rather than a ground-level shift in demographics. It has been in fact a divided neighborhood for as long as I have been here with a mostly Latinx (Dominican largely) population East of Broadway and a more White, Anglo population on this side of the divide. There are many artists here if my building is representative, mostly musicians but also visual artists and writers (a famous Mexican novelist - Álvaro Enrigue - now lives in our former apartment on the 2nd Floor - we moved upstairs to the 6th Floor).

Claire Bishop

I often think about Theaster Gates' approach, on the South Side of Chicago. He buys up derelict houses and buildings (often with the direct involvement of the city) and renovates them, usually in his signature style of repurposed materials. Some become resources (eg a library, a film club, a music space), others are rented out to local families interested in the arts. Of course, Theaster is working in an area that wasn't already being gentrified - he got in there first, which makes things complicated, but interesting. It's a different dynamic, and a very different model of artistic engagement to eg Rick Lowe in the 1990s. For better or worse, Theaster gets his hands dirty with the city to effect change, rather than standing outside or at one remove from these processes.



Greg Sholette

It's complicated Cristina, complicated and often messy and contradictory. Though certainly I immediately think of Rick Lowe and Project Row Houses as an artist and art project that has, along with other collaborators, serves as a cultural model that has challenged, altered and brought attention to the gentrification processes. One of the more telling comments Rick makes has to do with the way artists can mobilize the threatened but still extant social fabric of a neighborhood under stress "For developers, it's about short-term gain. They want to put in as little as possible and take out as much as possible right up front. From my perspective, as an artist that's interested in housing, it's about the possibility of long-term value that housing would produce in a community. It goes beyond the bricks and sticks that one might put up... to renovate a house or build a new house. How many layers can you put in this building that add meaning? Instead of taking a 100 or 200 square foot porch and squishing it down to just a little stoop, we [took into account] a history of families sitting on a porch while talking to people across the street."

That said, since the establishment and success of Project Row Houses there have been other art projects engaging with housing and real estate including Theaster Gates who must be cited in this context as a complex case.

Perhaps Inwood is an anomaly in terms of the recent history of gentrification and displacement, or maybe it reflects a new phase of the process in which big money moves in fast and begins to flip buildings quickly with no need to "soften up" the region first using art galleries (we have none up here) or hipster bars or boutique shops (though we do have chic clothing shops and bars that cater almost exclusively to Dominican consumers) few cafes (one Starbucks) or fine dining establishments (one fancy Dominican place that attracts a mixed crowd from what I can tell, mostly diner type food elsewhere including standard American and Dominican and other Latin American food places). If that is starting to shift as Washington Heights has done just South of us I have not noticed that yet.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s I did live in one of, if not the neighborhood associated with the process of displacement and gentrification which was the Lower East Side or Loissaida as some Puerto Rican and Nuyoricans residents called it, but specifically in my case I lived at 7th Street and Avenue B in an area occasionally known as the East Village when I arrived in 1977, and following the rise of real estate speculation in the early 1980s it came to be known almost exclusively known by that moniker or even by the weirdly infantilizing handle "Alphabet City," as if the rough and tumble "mean streets" were somehow magically made kid-friendly by the real estate speculators fiat. It was here that a wave of art galleries which frequently displaced small bodegas and PR and Dominican social clubs began to link the growing visual art world in NYC to the displacement of low-income and poor people including people of color (bear in mind that SoHo and Tribeca were also certainly gentrified, though there was far less human displacement due to the fact that many of the buildings in those parts of the city were industrial in nature and many already abandoned by business in severe economic downturn of the 1970s- see Zukin: *Loft Living*).

Chloë Bass

My current neighborhood (Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn) has certainly experienced gentrification, and continues to do so. The connection with the arts, specifically, is a bit unclear. Here's what I can say with some degree of clarity: well-known arts organizations, including the Brooklyn Museum during the Go! Brooklyn Open Studios project, The Laundromat Project, and Rush Arts have been, and mostly continue to be, involved in Bed-Stuy specifically. (Go! Brooklyn Open Studios is no longer a part of the Brooklyn Museum's programming as far as I know.) What direct effect this has had on the area seems to be small at best. We also have a close geographic relationship to Pratt, as the most affordable neighborhood within walking distance to their main campus. Many Pratt students have moved to Bed-Stuy, and there are also a lot of artists from the larger art world who live here for both cultural and economic reasons. Bed-Stuy rents have literally doubled since I moved into my (rent stabilized) apartment in August 2010. Home buying prices have also significantly increased; I can imagine that property taxes have as well, but I don't have the exact figures on that. I know that there are studio buildings in Bed-Stuy, as well as a few local galleries, but there hasn't been the kind of major art world investment in Bed-Stuy that there has been in Bushwick or Williamsburg in part because we have the wrong kind of buildings: the art world loves former industrial space, and what we have is brownstones*. There's another kind of world that invests in brownstones, and part of that world also invests in art, but they're not necessarily the same thing.

* There are also former industrial sites in Bed-Stuy, like the Cascade Laundry factory, but they are not a dominant real estate type except along Atlantic Avenue, at the intersection of Bed-Stuy and Crown Heights.

I guess there's a myth that needs debunking; that low-income POC neighborhoods are particularly homophobic and transphobic, this characterization is a form of erasure of the queer POCs who exist in those neighborhoods to begin with. It stems from the same belief that these neighborhoods need and want arts programming, so it starts with more indie collectives, then that leads to pop-up and DIY spaces then to more established galleries and so on to more established institutions that progressively get wealthier and whiter. This system again erases the people there that have been doing that cultural work in those spaces already. I'll just cite the IdeasCity/New Museum event in the Bronx as an example. These are some hard questions individuals, artists and collectives should ask themselves but if they're truly for dismantling systems of oppressive power, gentrification is violent modern colonialism and should be recognized as such.

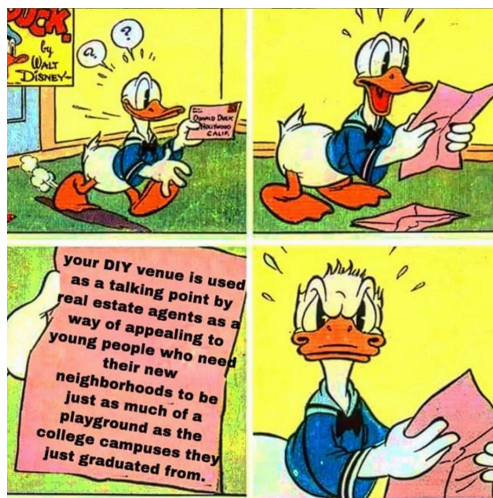


Is there a particular work or artist that subverts the dynamics of gentrification that you feel works especially well and why?

Subverting the Dynamics

Does being aware of the issues help subvert them? Can one person flip the script or can collectives like the Laundromat Project, Decolonize This Place, HydroPunk and Mi Casa No Es Su Casa mobilize and affect change through art? Unfortunately these types of artists, spaces and collectives are in the minority because even super progressive spaces either don't talk about gentrification specifically or critically enough, or they are created with the best of intentions and are hijacked by capitalism and developers.

Creative groups in gentrifying and pre-gentrified neighborhoods should consider how they're impacting their immediate surroundings or if they're trying to connect with their neighborhood. Here are some questions I wish art collectives would ask themselves: Is your collective involved with the existing community and how accessible is your programming? Are you getting educating yourself or getting involved with local politics and issues? Do you cater to folks from elsewhere (from outside the neighborhood or from outside the city)? Is your group made up of longer-term residents or mostly from recent transplants to the city in general?



Claire Bishop

My immediate neighbourhood is Hell's Kitchen, where the most visible signs of gentrification are largely an effect of Hudson Yards (10 blocks south) - the last two low-rise buildings (a gas station and a 24 hour garage) have been demolished and in their place are generic unaffordable condos are being built or already being let. But I also live across the street from two huge buildings of Mitchell-Lama subsidized housing for workers in the performing arts (Broadway is just down the road), which means that my block is very colourful (and sometimes flamboyant) mix of ages and ethnicities. To the extent that gentrification intersects with the arts in my neighbourhood, then, it's largely a matter of watching this creative oasis get surrounded by a rapacious context of significantly less interesting and less diverse people who live in condos with nauseating names like "The Charlie" and "The Oskar." And the prospect, which is always on the horizon, of Mitchell-Lama housing getting privatized, as has happened elsewhere (eg Roosevelt Island). Ten blocks down the road, however, the intersection of the arts and gentrification is more glaringly apparent at Hudson Yards; I've ranted elsewhere about the pointlessness of The Shed.

A Spoonful of Art Makes the Real Estate Go Up



Elizabeth Schambelan

New York, August 2019

V.-

Everybody else seems to have stopped thinking about you, but I haven't. It's not that I'm obsessed with you or anything, it's that I'm constantly reminded of you. From my office I can see a new skyscraper that has reared up near the waterfront just south of Hudson Yards, and I know the developers must be touting it as "HudYar-adjacent" or "trophy-proximate" or "a full-amenities frontier outpost of the New West Chelsea"—never mind that the New West Chelsea would more accurately be called the New Hell's Kitchen, a name that, though decidedly off-brand, is also very apropos, particularly in abbreviated form. Every time I glance out my window and see the modishly misshapen new spire, my mind's eye ricochets uptown, to you, the fulcrum of it all, the navel of New Hell.

One of the things I think about is the way you override thought. You elicit such a visceral initial response. When a person first sets eyes on you, their optic nerve sends an urgent signal straight to the amygdala, bypassing all cognitive processes. The signal makes itself felt not as a thought but as a feeling, which may be expressed by the primordial phoneme UGH. Like the fight-or-flight response, the disgust response is fundamental to our survival and is controlled by the primitive-mammal part of our brains. Usually, public sculpture does not strike our primitive-mammal brains as an imminent threat to our existence. But you do. Thomas Heatherwick presumably has an amygdala, as do all the many individuals who must have said, at various points between conception and construction: Yes! This is a good idea! How is it possible that you were built? And what exactly are you?

People attempting to describe you usually mention aliens, insects, or both. Insects are basically terrestrial aliens anyway, at least within the symbolic economy of science fiction, where benevolent visitors from outer space tend to be anthropomorphic, and evil ones often resemble bipedal arthropods. In your case we seem to be dealing with only part of a gigantic alien insect, although it's not at all clear which part, or what stage of the life cycle. You look like an armored torso, a carapace or cuirass, but there's also kind of an Oz-the-Great-and-Terrible thing going on, intimations of a disembodied head. You could also be a colossal pupa. Meanwhile, the suggestion of a hive is somehow superimposed on all of these possibilities. Your very indeterminacy—sculpture? building? torso? pupa? hive?—provokes anxiety, contributing to the overall effect of grotesque, looming menace.

Shani Peters

To begin displacement is never okay and if those younger wealthier more educated POC's are individually versus communally minded that is problem. If those folks are functioning like wealthy, entitled, oblivious white people irregardless of their born ethnicity, than they are as much a problem as the stated group. But, if they are actively working to leverage their resources for the greater good of overwhelming disenfranchised communities then that is a benefit. As someone who has given free labor and under earned for years for the sake of the greater good, and is only recently beginning to be more practical about my personal finances, I speak from a place of genuine internal reflection when I say that our communities only harm ourselves when we reject entirely associations to wealth and education. Until we or Earth itself converts our society away from capitalism, our communities need resources to so survive and certainly to thrive. If we work from principals of sharing and communalism the access that few of us may have can be to the benefit of us all.



Chloë Bass

I am a younger, wealthier, and more educated POC/Queer person who lives within an existing mixed-class, largely Black community (that's becoming less class mixed and less Black as each year passes). In a neighborhood that had a median household income of around \$53,000 in 2017, I made closer to \$70,000/year as a single person. That gives me a huge amount more flexibility and choice than so many of my neighbors. I am not severely rent-burdened (I spent about 35% of my TAKE HOME income on rent every month). The funny thing is that even under these conditions, I am still not in a good place to move to a different neighborhood, or even a different apartment within my own neighborhood. The reality is that my income increased while my rent remained stabilized. When I first lived alone in my apartment, my rent was well over 50% of my income. It is a particular and rare economic position to have my income double and my rent remain the same. All of that said, even when I made closer to \$35,000/year, I had a different financial position than many of my neighbors. I am not financially responsible for anyone other than myself. I have not only a college degree, but a master's degree. I have no school or credit card debt. My money, therefore, is basically my own. I don't know who lived in my apartment before I lived here. But I saw waves of displacement happen in Bushwick for many years and I know that it's consistent, insidious, and hard to track when we are taking part in terrible real estate practices that are in no way transparent. I think a lot of people are way more complicit in displacement than they realize, and to some extent it's not exactly their fault; it's hard to get this information even when you're really looking.

And yet—and yet—you are so thoroughly dwarfed by the starchitectural behemoths all around you as to seem absurdly tiny by comparison. You are both way too big AND way too small. This amazing double failure of scale is one of the things about you that I simply cannot get over.

In fairness, I should acknowledge that you become less disgusting at close range. Your interior is not gross. It's just very postmodern, which is an otiose thing for contemporary architecture to be. Postmodernism, per Fredric Jameson, is the cultural logic of late capitalism. We are so far beyond that now. Late capitalism was still at least somewhat constrained by its own hypocrisies (as expressed in the rhetoric of "conservatism"). But late-late-late capitalism seems to have shed virtually all inhibition. Short of sticking a colossal banner reading FUCK YOU, POORS at the pinnacle of 30 Hudson Yards, it's hard to imagine how the development could more clearly telegraph the cultural logic of our era. Yet here you are, offering your textbook rendition of hyperspace, a quintessentially po-mo architectural effect that today inspires nostalgia for the era of Max Headroom and asymmetrical earrings. Your hyperspace is kitsch. Its Escher-ish disorientations are no match for current reality, which has outstripped the capacities of any sort of spatial modeling. To grasp this, we need look no further than your very own Vessel Ambassadors. Diagramming the interdimensional insanities of an epoch in which that job title can exist is going to require something like string theory.

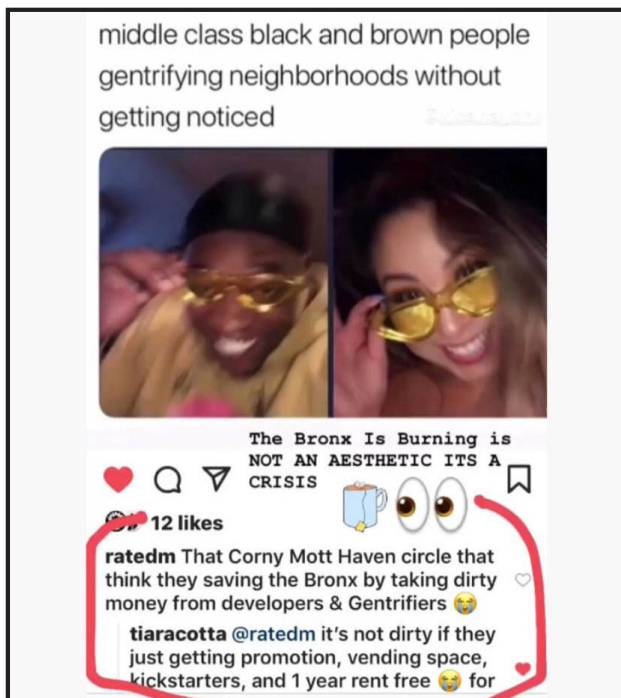
Terrifying yet laughable, decadent yet boring, semiotically incoherent yet way too on-the-nose, and heinous—I mean, aesthetically, just heinous... I suppose you are a wonder of the world, a sublime monument to badness. Whatever is wrong with you is wrong not just aesthetically but absolutely, existentially, ontologically. In one of the essays in *Men in Dark Times*, Hannah Arendt proposes "moral taste" as the faculty that permitted Rosa Luxemburg and her friends and comrades to find one another and to act collectively, as beacons. You're sort of the opposite of Rosa Luxemburg, a cyclonic consolidation of the dark energy of dark times. The intersecting lines of your reticulated structure represent all the crossroads, all the significant junctures in the design process, and in the development process, and in history—all the diseased decision trees that brought us to this moment. I should congratulate you, because this moment is your moment, the moment of an object that is called the Vessel but is full of holes.

xo

E.

POC Bourgeoisie & Gentefication

This query stems from my research and reading, I've come across the topic of Gentefication usually in reference to LA's Boyle Heights, but it could also apply to any urban city with a population of upwardly mobile, young, people of color. It popped up again recently in an episode of one of my favorite podcasts, Tea with Queen and J, one point that stuck out to me in their segment was the thought that transplanted black people were benefitting from NYC's black neighborhoods but often not contributing to them positively. However they could not be responsible for, or cause gentrification because typically when black people move in, they don't raise property values. I don't think that assessment holds true for other PoC, as with the massive influx of wealthy Asians to Roosevelt Island or in the case of Boyle Heights and the younger generation of Latinx there.



Does there need to be a systematic flow of power behind gentrification as there is with institutionalized racism? Does gentrification have more to do with class than race? In this country and in particular in New York City with the most segregated public school system in the US, these issues seem intrinsically linked. So with this seemingly contradictory and nuanced information, I'm seeking more thoughts to inform my politics and myself. I do know that white people can gentrify white neighborhoods (see examples like Greenpoint and the displaced Polish immigrants and my personal experience in Park Slope.) More often than not, it's wealthy white people who displace poorer communities of color, so that shouldn't be understated in my asking these questions.

Answered by PoC only

What are your thoughts on the concept of younger, wealthier or more educated PoC and/or Queer folks displacing folks in existing marginalized communities? –See concept of Gentefication. How has this informed your politics and/or practice?