

# 10 STEPS TO START A TALK ON ART AND LABOR WITH ARTISTS

by Anna Moreno

1. Say: We never work alone. We should consider the art world as something more than a business model, and use its eminently social character against this unspoken precarity.

1.1 The figure of the entrepreneur represents a setback of our social conquests. It is a full ideological chess-move. Unions, collective action and radical democracy are seen as outdated and counter-productive under this lens.

2. Assume that we are being exploited: The audience produces spectacular value similar to the online prosumer. You test it for free, we take your feedback, also for free. But a free system can also reorganise itself under tyrannical forms giving the false impression that resources are free, controlling dissent through propaganda.

2.1 Beware! It is not innovation while it is still a human, not a robot, doing the crappy job at the end of the line.

3. Recognise the artistic proletariat: Until we do not accept our affinity with the precarity of a working class, even though we are privileged, highly educated, former middle-class individuals, until then we will be speculated upon for the sake of our lifestyle, producing value through innovation, creativity, etc.

3.1 Entrepreneurship wants to produce unicorns (multi-billion monopoly businesses) by justifying its efficiency, but undercutting just drops value because it lowers the standards of living for everyone (except for the 1%)

4. Abort your projects. The word project creates the perfect

ambivalence between visibility and exploitation. It comes from the world of management so it becomes de-politicised. Artists become agents of the project because its success depends on the evaluators. As in a never ending open call pyramidal scheme.

4.1 Ponzi-schemes such as cross-subsidisation in the new command economy. Funding is linked to someone wanting to be part of a system of value. At loss is any clear ideology.

5. Embody your post-fordist entity as a performer. Work, work, work, work, work.

5.1 Remember: Post-capitalism works best with people that have an inclination for self-sacrifice. Do not self-sacrifice. Do not work, do not work, do not work.

6. Have a clear plan, consisting of:

- Fair income for artists stipulated under a code of good practices
- Minimum working conditions under signed contract between the institution and the artist
- Clear distinction between production, honorarium and exhibition costs in any commissioned work

6.1 Have a clear plan, consisting of:

- Universal basic income
- Welfare
- De-centralised economy
- Full automation
- Valuing of unpaid and emotional labor

7. Lobby to force the institution to accept a code of good practices for art. Be aware of our strength. If we do not produce, the cultural machinery stops.

7.1 Lobby to force corporations to adhere to code of good practices for employees. Be aware of our strength. If we do not produce, the capitalist machinery stops.

8. Affirm the non-efficient as an important production practice. The guilt of the artist is a lacra of social constructs telling you that you should not enjoy too much what you do, just enough to conform.

8.1 Affirm rest as an important post-capitalist practice. The guilt of the

worker is a lacra of an aggressive meritocratic culture.

9. Adopt some not-so-symbolic strategies to beat the self-exploitation of the artist:

- Produce perishable works that cannot be speculated upon (and sell them of course)
- Be lazy and do not capitalise it as part of your lifestyle
- Do never finish your projects

9.1 Some not-so-symbolic strategies to beat self-exploitation:

- Through consumption: senseless spending, without following a predictable pattern that could be capitalised
- Laziness, even though this is a tricky one as it is at the core of neoliberalism
- Doing less, refusing to finish things.

10. Consider the consequences of not ever working again. Ever.

10.1 Consider pleasure, solidarity, empathy, conviviality as ideological weapons: We need irony and sarcasm to recombine our collective understanding of the conditions of production.