CHAPTER 10
HACKING THE ARCHIVES: THE 2012 OLYMPIC LEGACY, FUN PALACES AND GAME THEATRE
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Introduction

'All my life has been a search for community'[1]

Clive Barker's rich and varied career as an actor, writer, director and pedagogue is interwoven amongst a history of radical theatrical experimentation and political activism in the archives at Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance, the University of East London, the V&A Museum, the Theatre Royal Stratford East, and the British Library. The origins of this alternative theatre movement can be traced back to the cultural impact of socialism in the late nineteenth century. The disenfranchisement of the working class was vividly documented in novels by Margaret Harkness, Robert Tressell and Jack London, whilst eminent figures such as George Bernard Shaw, John Ruskin, William Morris, and H. G. Wells imagined utopian societies engendered by mass democratization. Institutions that were part of this 'settlement movement',[2] such as Toynbee Hall, the Fabian Society, the Socialist League and the Social Democratic Federation, were set up to 'provide the sort of social leadership that pre-industrial societies had'[3] through workers' education programmes, sporting events and wider cultural activities. The First World War and the Russian Revolution continued to inculcate a new class consciousness in the body politick. The General Strike of 1926 expressed mass dissatisfaction with the elitist, bourgeois and profoundly unrepresentative political establishment in Britain. Class became a pressing political issue in British society as the labour movement went from strength to strength in the early twentieth century, leading to the first Labour government in 1924 and the creation of the welfare state by Clement Attlee's Labour government in 1945.

Notable theatre companies and organizations in this political milieu were the Red Megaphones, the Workers' Theatre Movement, Unity Theatre and

Theatre of Action (which went on to become Theatre Union in 1936 and later became Theatre Workshop in 1945). This movement continued in the post-war period with the formation of Inter-Action, CAST (Cartoon Archetypal Slogan Theatre), The General Will, Joint Stock, Gay Sweatshop, People Show, Welfare State, 7:84 and Centre 42. These pioneering generations of thinkers and artists considered theatre and political activism to be synonymous. By the 1970s joining a theatre company expressed a commitment to radical democratic social change through mass political participation.[4] Theatre was a tool for empowering audiences to create new forms of social organization through artistic experimentation in public spaces.

The history of the alternative theatre movement is preserved in the archives, but this history is not over or complete. The past in the twenty-first century 'is not what it used to be. [Historical memory] used to mark the relation of a community or a nation to its past, but the boundary between past and present used to be stronger and more stable than it appears to be today'.[5] The lacunae of archives infuses history with liveness by giving 'place, order and future to the remainder' and allows us to 'consider *things*, including documents, as reiterations to be acted upon'.[6] 'Archive fever'[7] is the desire to know and touch the past, to compose meaning out of life's assorted fragments so we can learn who we are and imagine who we may become. The archive in the twenty-first century has emerged as 'a politics of the imagination in which the past has become a place of succour and strength, a kind of home, for the ideas people possess of who they really want to be'.[8] Therefore, archival 'documents are not in opposition to performance, but rather they emerge from and are part of the environment generated by performance. Not only do they require meaning in relation to it, they become a sign for it'.[9] I contend that the performance environment includes the political ideologies and exigencies that motivated Clive Barker and his contemporaries to use theatre to reimagine the idea of community in collaboration with audiences. One of the most valuable aspects of the alternative theatre movement's legacy in the current political climate is to inspire practitioners to collaborate with audiences in making the idea of community perpetually open to reinvention, in order to reimagine what British society could be through theatre; this is particularly necessary at a time when the country is bitterly divided along political, cultural and social lines.

In this chapter I frame the archive as a dynamic, live entity within theatre historiography. This critical lens enables me to consider how the archives mentioned above can act as 'potential evidence for histories yet to be

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completed'[10] by conceptualizing Barker's legacy in the future tense. Archival documents are treated as nascent imaginaries of communities that are distinct from the hyper-individualized, mass consumer and market-oriented forms of social organization that have been hegemonic in Britain for four decades. I have written elsewhere that the live medium functions as a mode of 'archival production' when documents and audiences' memories become catalysts for new performance processes and artworks.[11] This reconfigures liveness into an experience of distributive co-presence between objects, places, people, times, histories and ideas that stretches over time through archival documents.[12] Conversely, the archive becomes a live space when documents are accessed by readers, which enables the information instantiated within them to enter contemporary discourse and consequently creates a method of theatre historiography where 'live acts and their translation into text are generative iterations of knowledge production'.[13] In distinction to the archive's role within an economic system of mass reproduction where histories of performance are 're-written, through the contemporary art market ... as the performative production of objects, relics and traces of value and desire'[14], liveness in the context of the archive embodies the contemporary theatre ecology, which is 'prodigiously spread across material and virtual space in a myriad of interconnected systems'.[15]

'Hacking' is a term widely used in the areas of digital design, games studies and interactive art to denote practical skills in reinventing computer hardware and software and an artistic strategy of material reappropriation. In broader cultural terms, hackers are rebels looking for ways to subvert structures of power and control in the political sphere. In this spirit I hack the historical figure of Clive Barker from the archives into an idea of performative political emancipation from the paradigm of community as it is structured in modern capitalist democracies. Moreover, the rubric of hacking is used in my argumentation to analyse how participatory performances that incorporate technology into their dramaturgies gamify public spaces to embed theatre into everyday life, a mode of performance that expresses the artistic and political imperatives of the alternative theatre movement.

Barker's future-tense legacy is explored in the context of the 2012 Olympic legacy and its impact on East London's cultural ecology. This perspective is relevant for the following reasons. Firstly, Barker's membership of Theatre Workshop makes him a significant point of reference in Stratford's theatre history. His work with Joan Littlewood was an important influence on his praxis in terms of how he came to understand that the basis of an actor's

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work is conditioned by 'the controlling discipline of the social and economic necessities of life' that the actor 'carries around inside' and 'applies . . . in a generalised fashion, to new areas of work', which can inhibit their ability to respond creatively to new dramatic situations and contexts.[16] Barker's work with games as a basis for creative exploration and spontaneity acts as a conceptual point of departure to examine how the Olympic legacy denudes citizens of their right to act as agents of societal change, before the chapter goes on to discuss how the Olympic Village in Stratford is an analogue of future imaginaries of ideal communities. Barker's contention that the 'patterns or basic themes of culture should be deducible from the study of play and games and no less from the study of economic, political, religious or familiar institutions'[17] provides a critical perspective for analysing how the spectacle of the 2012 Olympics performed a version of Britain's national identity that failed to represent the power of citizens to continuously participate in reinventing their ideas of home, belonging, nation and identity.

Further, games and workshop exercises as actor training tools are the most well-known example of Barker's praxis, but he passionately believed that teaching should not just occur in institutions or as part of a prescribed curriculum or training programme. The most important task for artists and pedagogues in Barker's estimation was to share knowledge so communities could establish their own working practices and professional networks. This goal could only be accomplished if teaching and theatre were considered holistic activities responsive to the contemporary sociological conditions that artists worked within. Whilst he was never directly involved in its design or failed implementation, the Fun Palace project Joan Littlewood initiated in the mid-1960s with the architect Cedric Price encapsulates this vision. I consider how Joan Littlewood's vision for the Fun Palace has been transformed in the archive from an unrealized plan for creating an institution in Stratford which 'corresponded with the questioning of theatrical and cultural orthodoxies and the progressive sensibility that emerged in [the mid-twentieth century]'[18] into archival lacunae that produce models of communities resistant to commercial imperatives of social organization. This acts as a critical framing device to discuss how Littlewood's goal of utilizing cybernetics to 'democratise knowledge and engage in knowledge transfer'[19] is emulated in the use of digital technology to activate audience participation in my site-specific audio-walk *Voices from the Village* (2014).

Voices from the Village was written as part of my practice research doctoral thesis and explores the implications of the Olympic legacy for the residents who live in Stratford and Hackney Wick (a former industrial estate that

borders the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park), and what effects the legacy might have on the public memory of these sites. *Voices from the Village* was available to download on voicesfromthevillage.com from 2014 to2015 and can now be downloaded from the SoundCloud account soundcloud.com/jdunne-1. The dramaturgy of an audio-walk reveals the invisible political structures that govern regenerated sites using the sonic medium as a perceptual lens to explore the social systems of control present in the Olympic Village. Using *Voices from the Village* as a case study, I theorize how performance can hack the idea of the Olympic Village as a model for sustainable communities.

Finally, I discuss how Barker's gaming praxis has become part of a cross-fertilization of gaming, installation and participatory live artwork using interactive pieces by the East London-based ZU-UK Theatre and Digital Arts company as case studies. I discuss how interactive technologies and sites are incorporated into the dramaturgies of ZU-UK's *Binaural Dinner Date* (2017) and *#RioFoneHack at TBW* (2019) to hack public spaces in sites around Stratford and London's Docklands area.

The Olympic legacy

The 2012 Olympic Games was presented to the public as a kernel for building communities of the future. The opening ceremony 'presented twenty-first century Britain first and foremost as a land of cultural expertise (particularly in digital developments) and ethnic diversity'.[20] Following the 7/7 terrorist attacks in London in 2005, the day after the city was awarded the bid to host the games, the Olympics came to symbolize tolerance, internationalism and modernity and the antithesis to political violence. The former London Mayor Ken Livingstone described London as 'a beacon of what the world can be' where children will dream of coming to 'run faster, jump higher and run farther than anyone has done before'.[21] Some years later the prime minister, David Cameron, stated that 'legacy [was] built into the DNA of London 2012':[22] 'More cohesive and proactive communities would be a genuine legacy from London 2012, which would last for generations and would support the creation of the Big Society. We want to ensure that the Games leave a lasting legacy as the most equality-friendly ever.'[23]

British politics has radically changed since 2012. Following Brexit, London has become synonymous with an out-of-touch liberal elite, a bastion of internationalism that is inimical to British traditions. London's

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multicultural society is now widely regarded by the Conservative government and the right-wing press as representative of everything wrong with the nation that must be rectified by reducing immigration and injecting nationalist rhetoric about Britain's superiority into public discourse. Moreover, a decade of austerity has eroded the social fabric of the public realm, perhaps permanently, leaving many people in the capital to lead precarious lives with insecure jobs, high rents and stagnant wages – leading Jen Harvie to conclude that 'London's cultural strategies designed for prosperity adversely affect liveability for its most vulnerable citizens'.[24]

The 2012 Olympic legacy is a benchmark of regeneration projects, which have become commonplace in Britain over the past forty years. Regeneration has become the shorthand for large-scale infrastructure projects designed to redevelop dilapidated urban conurbations. The goal of these projects is to create economic growth by attracting investment from private capital, primarily in the areas of residential property and retail. Much of the economic growth that regeneration projects have created in their local areas has been built on risky property speculation and increases in public debt: 'Since the 1980s, living on the never-never has been encouraged not only by banks but by both Labour and Tory governments, for whom consumer credit was the easiest way to stimulate growth. Moral and social status, the issue of legitimacy and illegitimacy, become reduced to credit worthiness.'[25]

The Olympic legacy has materialized as the E20 Village, the Westfield Shopping Centre, and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, which I collectively describe as the Olympic Village. I use the word 'village' because it is the favoured term of property developers and estate agents to partition London into hermetically sealed zones of affluence disconnected from the mess and sprawl of the city.

> [T]his is the architecture of extreme capitalism, which produces a divided landscape of privately owned, disconnected, high security, gated enclaves side by side with enclaves of poverty which remain untouched by the world around them. The stark segregation and highly visible mistrust between people, which together with the undemocratic nature of these new private places, erodes civil society.[26]

Anna Minton traces the origin of regeneration projects to London's Docklands. Once the centre of UK trade and heavy industry, the brownfield site by the River Thames is now home to the iconic enterprise zone the Isle of Dogs. The regeneration of the Docklands began during the Big Boom of

the 1980s when nationalized industries were privatized, and the City of London became the driver of economic growth. Margaret Thatcher's government replaced Britain's manufacturing centres with 'a combination of top-down diktat and economic laissez-faire'.[27] The privatization of land has now 'taken root in towns and cities around Britain, changing the physical fabric, the culture and the government of the places we live in'.[28] Privatizing land 'to serve the needs of business has become the standard model for the creation of every new place in towns and cities across the country'.[29] The regeneration of East London has not resulted in wealth trickling down but has instead made local communities 'displaced . . . as property prices ensured new homes remained unaffordable for locals, [they were] forced to move out further east to boroughs like Barking and Dagenham, or deeper into Essex'.[30] The 2012 Olympic Games created a legacy built on debt, with '£600 million . . . owed to the National Lottery' and '£675 million to the London Development Agency'.[31] The economic legacy of the Olympics can be described as a 'payback legacy' that 'concentrates on the disposal of material assets and liabilities – to whom are they bequeathed or sold off and under what conditions – and how debts of various kinds are to be negotiated within a time delimited frame'.[32]

These economic policies represent an assault on the hopes and aspirations of the alternative theatre movement. The deep cuts to arts funding and local government that Thatcher's government instituted fragmented the cultural landscape and made large-scale collaboration between artists extremely difficult. The aim of using theatre to ignite the public imagination of a society governed by mass democratic participation in local communities was further diluted by the New Labour government (1997–2010) who rebranded the arts as the cultural industries in order to absorb cultural activities into the business community. Arts organizations were expected to run as small businesses, embracing enterprise and entrepreneurialism. Human capital and intellectual property were cited as key drivers of innovation and growth in the knowledge-based economy. The Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition government (2010–15) cut £6 billion from the Arts Council's grant from the Department for Media, Culture and Sport's budget. The National Portfolio scheme now sets artistic agendas concordant with pan-government priorities. New and experimental work is largely funded by the National Lottery and small grants from independent organizations. 'By simultaneously promoting a culture of philanthropy, Cameron's government . . . threaten[ed] the independence of arts organisations, requiring them to bend to the priorities of business in order to survive'.[33] Questions of identity

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rather than class have consequently become the defining issue for the contemporary alternative theatre movement: 'This current generation of artists tend to commit to political action as individuals within more loosely based collectives, perhaps as a direct result of the ways in which companies' identities and bodies of work have been co-opted into the capitalist marketplace of the creative industries.'[34]

Theatre in twenty-first-century British culture is thus valued for its capacity to enhance and affirm extant values of nation, society and community rather than radically hack what these ideas mean for audiences today. Promoting values of inclusion, diversity and widening participation is artificially set against the important artistic qualities of sublimity, beauty, intimacy, experimentation and creative failure in the political sphere. This false dichotomy fails to account for the political language of aesthetics. 'The personal is the means of experiencing the conceptual, while the conceptual structure is a way of understanding the personal.'[35] The new levels of social cohesion and prosperity that London 2012 symbolized now appear crudely fantastical. The ideas of nation and community traditionally defined as that which 'binds people together through shared temperament, language, history, culture, landscape and so on'[36] are unravelling under the forces of globalization. Attempts to stage the essence of British culture in one event failed to perform the experience of being a global citizen whose sense of community is not determined by geographical territory. The real legacy of the Olympics is a diminution of the status afforded to art and cultural events to construct new ways of living. The archive of the alternative theatre movement can help to restore this status by giving contemporary practitioners the conceptual and practical tools to reinvent the idea of community in a globalized world.

The site where the Olympic Village now sits, opposite the Theatre Royal Stratford East, was considered a suitable site for building the first Fun Palace. In his personal correspondences housed in the Rose Bruford archive, Barker writes that the Fun Palace responds to a deep social need for public spaces to possess the quality of plasticity in their function and materiality by acting as an incubator of role play, games and make-believe:

> At the moment, as a society, we seem to be leaving the solution of the problems to chance or else to existing institutions, many of which contain entrenched vested interests opposed to change and development, many totally inadequate to the social needs of the time, many of an important minority interest are presumed capable of adaptation to majority interest.[37]

The environment where art is experienced needs to be fully adaptive to the contingencies of the cultural ecology of the audience. Whilst the informational environment envisioned by Littlewood was never built, hybrid performance practices that incorporate digital technology into the dramaturgy as an agent of audience participation transform the political exigencies of the Fun Palace as preserved in the archives into a discursive event played out in sites and digital networks. The mobility of this mode of artistic democratic participation emulates the thinking by Barker and his contemporaries that theatre responds most effectively to the present sociological conditions of the audience if institutions are dispensed with and companies committed to touring full time. The leader of CAST, Roland Muldoon, expressed the ambition thus: 'What we are suggesting is that theatre should go towards people, and not people towards theatre'.[38] The affordances of digital technology enable a form of theatrical mobility favoured by the alternative theatre movement. I now go on to discuss how audiences participate in *Voices from the Village* by hacking imaginaries of future communities in the Olympic Village through producing documents that act 'as fictions of a reality with a transformative power in them'.[39]

Hacking the archives

The Fun Palace that Joan Littlewood envisaged was a public space functioning as a cultural dialectic between 'traditional forms of popular entertainment such as the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens and the funfair', and the 'impetus between settlement houses that originated in Victorian England, where reformers lived and worked in disadvantaged areas to facilitate social and educational improvement'.[40] Creating a space where future forms of social organization can be experimented with through interacting with technology reflects a 'social impetus [that] is [now] present in the now fashionable themes of lifelong learning, brownfield regeneration and intelligent environments'[41] without entrenching political and economic inequalities.

The Fun Palace would serve as an immersive informational environment for leisure and educational purposes. Littlewood felt that the automization of society had the potential to multiply the means by which artists could directly communicate with audiences. Art, technology and entertainment would come together to 'awaken interest and desire and satisfy a demand for knowledge' using 'electronic games and machines of language structures to lead to co-operative action',[42] which in a broader sense would allow visitors

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to experience 'how to live in a scientific culture'.[43] Littlewood considered it vital that public spaces were designed as interactive systems 'for encouraging the creative behaviour that is necessary in an automated society' so 'that people in a democratic society should know something about high level decision making in order to use their vote'. This system would 'provide them with knowledge about decision making that could not readily be obtained in real life'.[44] We can see the influence of the cybernetic lexicon in Baker's praxis when he says that the human being is a learning programme.[45]

In the age of big data, smart objects, pervasive information and the internet of things, the notion of a technologically immersive learning environment is no longer theoretical. Indeed, the consumption and transmission of information through digital technology acts as the infrastructure of modern democratic capitalist societies. But the internet has shifted modern imaginaries of these informational environments from institutions to portals, spaces, fluid structures and discursive events that are sewn into the fabric of everyday life. Furthermore, the surveillance affordances of digital technology conflict with the emancipatory potential Littlewood and Barker envisaged for cybernetics: 'Rather than CCTV being used as a vehicle for surveillance and control, Littlewood planned to co-opt this technology as a democratising resource for allowing access into other worlds and transmitting an appreciation of the performativity of everyday life.'[46]

Surveillance today is used to stifle political dissent or antisocial and undesirable behaviour. The social forms of interaction that surveillance technologies engender in public spaces makes their co-optation by artists wishing to utilize them to enhance systems of democratic participation almost impossible. 'The very software that enables almost incomprehensible invasions of privacy is protected by laws that guard its privacy. This is the new privacy. It is a post-democracy privacy'.[47] The pervasive nature of the internet turns all communication technologies into surveillance systems and configures public imaginaries of social interaction into a 'human simulation of machine learning systems; a confluent hive mind in which each element learns and operates in concert with every other element. In the model of machine confluence, the "freedom" of each individual machine is subordinated to the knowledge of the system as a whole.'[48]

Regenerated sites such as the Olympic Village inflict the dystopian vision of pervasive systems of surveillance acting as the model for contemporary democratic ideals of community that beget participatory social experimentations, by immersing the public in invisible systems of

informational organization and categorization that are out of their control. When the autonomy of the individual can only be expressed through acts of economic consumption, their natural desire to explore and discover through doing is suppressed. This renders the social function of the 2012 Olympic Games in direct opposition to Barker's belief that the aim of games is 'not to produce a multi-potential puppet, since every human being will find new possibilities in his own way by using his own personal resources and overcoming his own resistances'.[49] If we turn to Barker's praxis for inspiration, hacking the social structure of modern communities requires artists to create modes of audience participation not confined to a particular event or institution by using games and gaming dramaturgies as a model for social interaction.

Games, here, are defined as systems that emulate the plasticity of the Fun Palace in their capacity to be restructured by players so that they may 'examine alternative choices and [. . .] work through the consequences of those choices'.[50] The informational environment of the Fun Palace diverges from contemporary forms of networked communication through its emphasis on learning through social experimentation. In contrast, communication technologies today function to organize behaviours and social codes within a network of law enforcement operations.[51] Terminology from the field of information science can aid in the conceptual development of this mode of audience participation by framing the sites where these structures play out as platforms. '"[A] platform" is a system that can be programmed and therefore customised by outside users, and in that way adapted to countless needs and niches that the platform's original developers could not possibly have contemplated'.[52]

By guiding participants around a regenerated site via an audio guide, *Voices from the Village* structures encounters between the London Legacy Development Corporation's version of East London's past and the participant's present, live experience of this 'legacy blueprint'.[53] Participants are guided through the sites in the first two acts by the Legacy Builder and the 2012 Manager who attempt to inculcate them into the Legacy Project – a new type of citizenry based on the regeneration paradigm. In the third act participants explore what would happen to the communities in the neighbouring Hackney Wick estate if it was regenerated. The audio-walk is designed for one person to experience at any time of day. The open-ended form of this technologically mediated performance echoes Littlewood's wish to create a mobile and adaptable site that functions as a 'brain-bank' where 'information [is] piped from site to site'.[54]

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The first two acts of *Voices from the Village* are titled 'Gateway to the Nation's Dreams' and 'Training for the Next Stage of Regeneration', respectively. In 'Gateway to the Nation's Dreams', the Legacy Builder describes Stratford as the 'Old Quarter' to denote its ruinous state. The rumours of crime and degradation provide titillating anecdotes for the Village's residents who can comfortably sneer at their neighbours whilst enjoying the fruits of regeneration. The Legacy Builders only have to point to the older buildings across the train tracks to remind the community of the hell they've escaped from. In contrast to Stratford, the Olympic Village is the beginning of a new, more prosperous, happy, better time.

> **Legacy Builder** You are currently passing through parts of London's Old Quarter. This is a site that is ripe for building new homes for hard-working families – as long as those families have the money, of course. The empty spaces you see will be gone one day. Eventually, we'll regenerate all of London, perhaps even the entire country . . . You probably won't be alive to see it, but if the Legacy Project goes smoothly then your children sure will . . . the E20 residents are always looking ahead, and never look back farther than 2012.[55]

> **2012 Manager** It's a jungle beyond the perimeter fences. No one is safe. These people's lives are nothing more than fights for survival. You've seen the news; gangs of teenagers patrolling the streets . . . women prostituting themselves out to their neighbours . . . old people terrorised by children from local estates.[56]

The Westfield mall not only acts as a portal to this future but is also a training ground for an ideal model of citizenry. Participants shop for appropriate outfits in Westfield during 'Training for the Next Stage of Regeneration' to role play their future regenerated selves. Giving participants the task of shopping for clothes acts as a means of deepening their immersion into the Legacy Project; their role as participants in a performance bleeds into their role as consumers in a mega-mall.

> **2012 Manager** You are looking at the future you, the regenerated you, which you could become if you live in the Village. Don't you look happier, healthier and wealthier? Surely you agree the regenerated you is just better than the present one? This outfit could mark the start of an exciting adventure.[57]

The act of trying on new clothes to conform to the regenerated community transforms the participant into the archetype of the modern consumer who 'has become a consumer of illusions'.[58] Consumer culture produces an illusory experience of society where the citizen trades her rights of democratic participation for the right to buy limitless products. True, consumer culture has been with us since the Industrial Revolution, but the elision between consumerism and democratic participation is a hallmark of modern democratic capitalism. The neoliberal model of citizenry is distinctive because it allows the modern twenty-first-century citizen to buy products to enhance their freedom. In a direct parallel with Augusto Boal's forum theatre techniques, Barker was interested in using role play so audiences could 'participate in the event by changing it'.[59] Playing the role of a regenerated citizen in *Voices from the Village* allows the participant to project an image of themselves into the regenerated community in order to imagine how their lives would change if they became part of the Legacy Project.

During the third act, 'An Exhibited Community', participants are guided through a time in which Hackney Wick has become a regenerated community. The Documenter character speaks to participants from a dystopian future. He instructs them to take photographs of the site to begin an archive that will make the public aware of what will be lost if the Olympic Legacy is expanded. The juxtaposition between what the participants see in the sites with what the Documenter describes the sites as looking like in his time shifts the participant's perceptions of what constitutes the past.

> **Documenter** Micro-cameras and movement sensors have been installed everywhere . . . Some of the cameras filming you now are already controlled by the Legacy Builders. If I ever manage to hack into their network maybe I'll find a video of you, listening to me . . . All of the graffiti you can see has been painted over in the future. All those houseboats you can see? All gone. Only marine security and rowing teams are allowed on the canal – it makes the community safer, apparently.[60]

The Hackney Wick which participants walk through is past in the sense that what they can see – the graffiti, the houseboats, the crumbling factories and warehouses – will not remain in the future as they see it, but will become incorporated into the Olympic Legacy. The Documenter never prescribes what the Wick should become, only that it is vital for participants to begin to

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imagine other futures for it so it does not become the site of yet another regeneration project.

Documenting sites in *Voices from the Village* invokes the social impetus of the Fun Palace by constituting a performance of potential democratic participation, via participants contributing their story to a collection of documents that act as nascent versions of democratic communities. Each photograph is evidence of a time and place that in the dramaturgy of *Voices from the Village* has been largely forgotten, whilst on the *Voices from the Village* website the photographs constitute an idea of community that is becoming commodified by regeneration. *Voices from the Village* involves connecting with people in the imaginative and digital realms, and reflects the mode of performative historiography I discussed in the introduction by seeding alternative forms of community in the public imagination. By documenting Hackney Wick, participants contribute to its evolving history and challenge the notion that its future is inevitable by making these documents part of a live experience in a performance.

Hacking public spaces

ZU-UK's practice strives to show that art isn't far away from working-class communities, and that collaborating with artists in the creation of art can enhance how people relate to themselves and each other in public spaces. Their commitment to 'mak[ing] art for people who don't think it's for them in spaces art does not usually inhabit'[61] led the company directors Persis Jadé Maravala and Jorge Lopes Ramos to establish their GAS (Games Art Stratford) Station studio and office in the Gainsborough Learning Centre, an adult education college located in West Ham, one of London's most economically deprived areas. ZU-UK's decision to embed themselves in a working-class community resonates with Clive Barker's resistance to working in venues that are part of the artistic establishment for fear that the institutional constraints would dilute the political impetus of theatre: 'Working inside the establishment is always a contradictory process. The basic compromises necessary to present politically committed work inside an alien system will mute, if not silence, the radicalism of the dramatists'.[62] However, he also recognized that the presence of artists could alter 'the system' in order 'to accommodate them'.[63] Maravala and Ramos became alert to the tension between radicalism and inclusion that Barker alludes to when they realized that their immersive show *Hotel Medea* (2009–12) was only being seen by a predominantly white, middle-class

audience with high levels of disposable income.[64] Consciously turning away from producing large-scale immersive spectacles, ZU-UK decided to make work in public spaces as part of a wider strategy for making theatre and art a part of people's everyday lives.

Invoking the philosophy of Michel de Certeau, Alan Read argues that performances in public spaces embody the dialectical relationship between theatre and the everyday through 'the emergence of others' stories from other places, through which theatre might elucidate a political claim, a romantic gesture, or a metaphysical meaning'.[65] Performing in public spaces where artworks do not usually exist allows people to encounter ZU-UK's work in a familiar setting, and works as an artistic strategy designed to ameliorate the risk of alienating audiences from the situations ZU-UK are inviting them to participate in.

Altering perceptions and experiences of public space is one of the artistic propositions for *#RioFoneHack at TBW*. ZU-UK hacked Brazilian public phones so participants could interact with voice recordings. The phone rings continuously, allowing any passer-by to experience it if they decide to pick it up. *#RioFoneHack* was previously installed in the Olympic Village in 2015 where three fictional Brazilian artists interacted with audiences using pulse, motion and voice.[66] The latest iteration is in Trinity Buoy Wharf in East London's Docklands area. The voice at the other end of the phone enhances the participant's awareness of the space by guiding them through gentle, easy to follow breathing exercises. Their focus is then directed to their immediate surroundings. Interspersed with these instructions are meditations on the history of the site.

> The Thames has a sense of itself and the Lea has a sense of itself and we are subject to a perhaps wavering sense of self that has to negotiate all the other senses of selves out there in the world – 7.6 billion of them. It's a struggle sometimes not to be carried away by the tide of another.[67]

The voice directs the participant's gaze to the various metamorphoses the city is undergoing, embodied in housing developments, retail parks and business zones produced from regeneration projects. *#RioFoneHack at TBW* makes participants aware that they are always immersed in stories; as an artistic intervention the piece enhances their awareness of the presence of the 'unconscious zones of the city'.[68] *#RioFoneHack at TBW* scaffolds artistic relations using the familiar form of a phone to engender intimate and

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surprising encounters between participants and public spaces. The experience subverts the spectacle of conventional immersive artworks by effectuating the conditions for the participant to imagine an internal personalized narrative of the sites they are standing in without having to articulate these narratives to another audience. The whole process acts as an analogue for how individuals can become the subjective of their own narrative if they are able to experience the sites they live in as palimpsests of other people's stories. Becoming attuned to these spectral presences hacks the familiar idea of what a community consists of by including the real and the imagined, the living and the dead, in the experience of living in a global city.

Rather than making them play a fictitious role where the codes of participation can be so obscure that audiences think they are 'getting it wrong', a key principle of ZU-UK's practice is to create supportive structures where participants are offered opportunities to take risks but are never forced by artists into making decisions that transgress a personal boundary. *Binaural Dinner Date* is a mixed-reality performance that premiered in Gerry's Kitchen, a restaurant named after the theatre manager Gerry Raffles opposite the Theatre Royal Stratford East, in the summer of 2017. The dramaturgy is based on gaming structures where audiences participate according to a set of easy to understand yet sometimes challenging rules. When participants arrive at *Binaural Dinner Date* they are greeted by a Hostess who tells them to put their headphones on and await further instructions. This initial greeting explicitly states the expectations of the artists. This is a crucial step in making the contract between artists and audiences as clear as possible for participants to feel comfortable in the dating reality ZU-UK create. Participants are guided through tasks and games by the live actors and by a voice speaking to them through the headphones. The binaural technology creates an intimate sonic universe for each couple to share secrets and play out fantasies of who they are and what they might become. This game-based dramaturgy emulates the effect Barker's gaming praxis aims to achieve in that it 'provides a situation where the student [or the participant] can find things out for him or herself rather than trying to reproduce a formula given by the teacher [or the artist]'.[69]

Conclusion

'The dream isn't dead. The dream of theatre being a community, a family, dies hard'.[70]

In this chapter I have discussed Clive Barker's legacy using a critical framing of performance historiography where archival documents are treated as materials that generate theatrical experiments with digital technology and audience participation in public spaces. This is an apposite approach for considering the legacy of the alternative theatre movement because the idea of community should always be open to reinvention, just as the knowledge that archives preserve continues to inspire future generations of artists to put the audience at the centre of their work. The task of the current generation of practitioners who have picked up the baton of left-wing political and artistic radicalism from the alternative theatre movement is to innovate forms of social organization that are not structured by the individualism of liberalism or the exclusionism of conservatism, if they wish for theatre to help bring about a more equal and just world. Crucially, artists today must develop techniques in developing interdisciplinary collaborations with audiences, which will optimally enable them to rehearse new ways of living that are not stymied by present political realities. This will require artists to take theatre out of the institutions and embed their work in public spaces. Indeed, the idea of 'the work' must be hacked to include everyday, ostensibly mundane and inconsequential interactions with the public, who must come to feel that they are valued as critical and creative agents within their cultural ecology.

Notes

1. Barker, 2007, 295.
2. Bew, 55.
3. Ibid., 54.
4. Cartwright, 37.
5. Huyssen, 1.
6. Clarke et al., 11.
7. Derrida, 1995.
8. Steedman, 76.
9. Dekker et al., 66.
10. Clarke et al., 11.
11. Dunne, 2015, 19–20.
12. Ibid., 44.
13. Dunne and Makrzanowska, 5.

14. Clarke et al., 12.

15. Kershaw, 77.

16. Barker, 2010, 2–3.

17. Barker, 1989, 228.

18. Holdsworth, 208.

19. Ibid., 214.

20. Tomlin, 20.

21. Fenwick, 2006.

22. Department for Media, Culture and Sport, 2012, 6.

23. Ibid.

24. Harvie, 114–15.

25. Cohen, 220.

26. Minton, xii.

27. Trilling, 12.

28. Minton, 3.

29. Ibid., 5.

30. Minton, 8.

31. Cohen, 220.

32. Ibid., 220.

33. Harvie, 15.

34. Tomlin, 8.

35. Rebellato, 249.

36. Ibid., 248.

37. Barker, *c.* 1960.

38. Working Men's College, *c.* 1965.

39. Pérez, 88.

40. Holdsworth, 206.

41. Ibid., 232.

42. Barker, *c.* 1960.

43. Cybernetics Committee, 1965.

44. Ibid.

45. Barker, 2010, 21.

46. Holdsworth, 216.

47. Harding, 141.

48. Zuboff, 20–1.

49. Barker, 2010, xvi–xvii.

50. Barker, 1989, 232.

51. Harding, 134.

52. Pérez, 80.

53. Department for Media, Culture and Sport, 2012, 7.

54. Littlewood, *c.* 1958.

55. Dunne, 2015, iv.

56. Ibid., xv.

57. Ibid., xvii.

58. Debord, 24.

59. Barker, *c.* 1960.

60. Dunne, 2015, xxvi.

61. Dunne, 2017.

62. Barker in Cartwright, 37.

63. Ibid.

64. Talking About Immersive Theatre, 2018.

65. Read, 138.

66. ZU-UK Theatre and Digital Arts Company, 2018.

67. ZU-UK, 2019.

68. ZU-UK, 2019.

69. McCaw, xv.

70. Barker, 2007, 298.

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