Politics in the Consequences: Re-thinking the Political Implications of Art by Looking at the Institutional Practice of Hosting Artists At-risk

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Abstract

This thesis explores how the practice of hosting and supporting artists at-risk by institutions can be analyzed to re-conceptualize the relationship between politics and art. It does so by looking at the theoretical framework of politics and the police order provided by Jacques Rancière and its criticism by Matthew Lampert regarding the non-existence of the production process of art in Rancière's thinking. The research analyzes the consequences artists may face for doing their work via the six qualitative interviews that were conducted within the institutional sphere of hosting artists at-risk. Building upon those interviews, I will turn back toward the introduced theoretical framework and expand the understanding of the political aspects of art by showing how these institutions and artists at-risk are located within the political fields of the state in which the risk is present and the state in which the institution is located.

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Introduction

The fact that politics and art are deeply intertwined becomes apparent when one looks at real-world events. In the Report "The State Of Artistic Freedom 2021", the NGO *Freemuse* states that "978 acts of violations of artistic freedom in 2020 in 89 countries and online spaces"[1] have happened the year before, ranging from artists that faced censorship (289 cases), artists that were threatened (103 cases), to artists that were killed (17 cases). These are the cases that have been reported, while the nature of the subject already implies that gaining information about persecuted artists might not always be possible, as can be seen in the case of the Uyghur singer Ablajan Ayup, who was presumably detained and brought to a Chinese 're-education' camp by the police in 2018.[2] Until today, no further information about his status has been made public.[3]

At the same time, international frameworks are in place that are supposed to protect these artists, for example, by including them into the category of 'Human Rights Defenders,' done so on the level of the United Nations, where the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights reported that "[c]ultural rights defenders have many similarities with other human rights defenders and their work should be recognized as being in the same category and of equal importance,"[4] which also becomes reflected within the research on the topic. For example, the researcher Nathalie Van Schagen uses the notion of artists as human rights defenders as an analytical category: "It is important to note that, in this study, the terms 'defenders' or human rights defenders (HRDs) encompass all groups relevant to TIRIs [=temporary international relocation initiatives], including artists, scholars, journalists and other civil society actors."[5]

[1] Freemuse, "The State Of Artistic Freedom 2021," 11.
[2] Hoshur, "Popular Uyghur Singer's Whereabouts Unknown, Believed Detained in Xinjiang Re-Education Camp."
[3] Kretschmer, "Peng Shuai."
[4] Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, "Cultural Rights Defenders," 3.
[5] Van Schagen, "Collaboration Between Temporary Relocation Initiatives," 13.

This categorization is done with reference to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders from 1998:

> "Individuals, groups, institutions and non-governmental organizations have an important role to play and a responsibility in safeguarding democracy, promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms and contributing to the promotion and advancement of democratic societies, institutions and processes."[6]

In this declaration, Human Rights Defenders are not only recognized for their work, but they are also protected from violations of their human rights.

The briefly outlined discrepancy between real-world events and international frameworks has led to the establishment of institutions that host threatened artists or support them by other means, such as financing artistic production. To classify these artists, I will refer to the term 'artists at-risk' since it does not specify the risk and remains open for different contexts, while it is at the same time a term already used by existing work.[7] At the same time, I want to highlight that this is not a definition that reduces their artistic work to the quality of being produced by someone persecuted. This classification is done with the ambition to show a structural relationship between those artists at-risk and politics, whereas the category of artist at-risk is understood as signifying the shared experience of being threatened in relation to the artistic work.

These institutions support artists at-risk in several ways, from relocation to being heard in the public sphere. Since not all their work circles around providing temporary relocation, I am not applying the term 'temporary international relocation initiatives' (TIRIs) used by Van Schagen. Nevertheless, the fact that these relocation and hosting processes are only temporary

[6] General Assembly, "Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms," 17.
[7] It has to be mentioned that there are two organizations with a similar name, Artists at Risk connection (ARC) and Artists at Risk (AR), whereas the concept of an artist at-risk within this paper does not build upon these organizations. I have decided to conjunct 'at-risk' in order to make the term more distinguishable from these organizations. For the use of the term within academia, see: Van Schagen, "Collaboration Between Temporary Relocation Initiatives"; Jones et al., *Temporary Shelter and Relocation Initiatives*; Blackmore, "African Artists at Risk"; Verstraete, "Turkey's Artists at Risk."

was also present in the conducted research for this thesis, meaning that artists at-risk were only able to stay for a certain time period in a different country.

Building upon the described situation and the way how institutions are aiming to function as 'gap fillers' in this field, this thesis looks at these institutions by asking to what extent an analysis of their work can broaden the theoretical understanding of the relationship between arts and politics. Turning toward Rancière, the first chapter will establish a theoretical framework in which the potential of art to challenge the 'distribution of the sensible,' the question of what can and cannot be seen within a society, is chosen as a starting point. This will become contextualized via the criticism of Rancière's theory articulated by Matthew Lampert, who argues that the political conditions of the artistic production process need to be included in such an analysis.

What follows is a more open theoretical framework that is not only looking at the perception of art but also at the steps that precede this moment when talking about arts and politics. I want to extend this debate even further by not only looking at production and perception but also by asking whether the reactions, to be more precise, the consequences artists at-risk are confronted with for doing their work, should be included in an analysis of politics and art.

In the second chapter, I will present empirical research to answer the arisen questions regarding the consequences faced by artists at-risk. Since the persecution and censorship of artists due to their work, as outlined at the beginning of this chapter, is systematic, I have chosen to interview six people who work or have worked within the institutional field of supporting artists at-risk. The information gained via the interviews will be grouped and presented thematically.

In the third chapter, I will integrate the insights gained from the interviews into the introduced theoretical framework, showing how the 'distribution of the sensible' is affecting

artists at-risk by making them (in-)visible. In conjunction with that, an analysis of the political nature and agency of the interviewed institutions will show how their work counters and supports mechanisms of the distribution of the sensible at the same time. Production and perception of art will be combined with the consequences to show how these moments cannot be seen as isolated from each other, therefore making it necessary to include the consequences in an analysis of politics and art.

After filling this theoretical gap, I will conclude by reflecting upon the agency of artists at-risk. Here, I will refer to Judith Butler in order to conceptualize how the bodily dimension enables a broader understanding of the political positions of artists at-risk. As my last point, I will show how the state of 'being at-risk' can be understood as a political category that can be mobilized by the artists, enabling them to gain positions in which they become heard by the public sphere, countering the mechanisms of invisibility that they are faced with.

Chapter 1 - Politics of Art: Reception, Production, Persecution

In his work on political theory, the philosopher Jacques Rancière introduces the concept of the 'distribution of the sensible' when thinking about the social dimension as a space that is pre-configured and hierarchized. Via this concept, he argues that what we presume to be the sphere of politics is not a neutral field without a framework but a field that has already been shaped without disclosing that this has happened. Therefore, the distribution of the sensible is characterized as a "generally implicit law"[8] that "presupposes a distribution of what is visible and what not, of what can be heard and what cannot."[9]

This process of creating (in-)visibility of positions and assigning recognition to subjects and groups requires an order that he coins *police order*, described by the scholar Keith Bassett as "a consensual order that confines politics to problems around the redistribution of power and wealth among counted, well-defined parts of the community."[10] Therefore, politics is limited to take place within a framework of given positions which causes the status of these positions, the police order, to become naturalized.[11] This means that the distribution of the sensible falls under the logic of a police order, whereas politics, as Mustafa Dikeç writes, is conceptualized by Rancière as "[t]he revocation of the very idea that partitioned spaces correspond to partitioned functions, groups and powers."[12] Following this framework of politics as a process of revocation means that politics, as it is reacting to something that has already been established, is challenging the police order.[13]

Moments that challenge the already-established order via politics can also be found within the practice of art, to a ceratin extent: "Doing art means displacing art's borders, just as

[8] Rancière, *Dissensus*, 36.
[9] Rancière, 36.
[10] Bassett, "Rancière, Politics, and the Occupy Movement," 887.
[11] Pirsoul, "Identity Between Police and Politics," 249.
[12] Dikeç, "Police, Politics, and the Right to the City," 94.
[13] Chambers, "Jacques Rancière and the Problem of Pure Politics," 307.

doing politics means displacing the borders of what is acknowledged as *the* political."[14] It is here where Rancière identifies art as a mode of expression that, although it cannot transform the distribution of the sensible itself, is capable of challenging the notion of 'reality' that is inherent in the logic of the police order by re-distributing the sensible within the artwork: "The practice of fiction undoes, and then re-articulates, connections between signs and images, images and times, and signs and spaces, framing a given sense of reality, a given 'commonsense.'"[15] Thus, fiction is capable of challenging the distribution of the sensible in a manner of mimicry.

It is important to note that, although Rancière is speaking of practices and the doing of art, his focus on the politics of art rather lies on the artwork and the perception of it. In the book *Dissensus*, Rancière's approach toward political art and focus on the perception of art lead to the argument that there cannot be a mono-causal relationship between an artwork and action: "There is no straight path from the viewing of a spectacle to an understanding of the state of the world, and none from intellectual awareness to political action."[16] Although this becomes articulated by Rancière with regards to specific forms of art that aim at creating such political actions, his conclusion dismisses a causality between art, perception, and political action on a general level.

Rather than fulfilling the function of a direct agitation, the artworks become independent of the intention placed into them by the artists. This also means that artworks can be perceived in a way that completely contradicts the intentions of their artists, as Rancière highlighted in an interview: "What happens in the aesthetic regime of art is that artists create objects that escape their will. […] There are democratic works that are made precisely by artists

[14] Rancière, *Dissensus*, 149.
[15] Rancière, 149.
[16] Rancière, 143.

who were not at all democrats."[17] Therefore, art is not only uncontrollable regarding political action but also concerning the moment of perception and meaning-making processes.

Combining these arguments, Rancière argues that a political potential of art might be found within a phenomenon he coins *rupture*, which is the already-described process of challenging the distribution of the sensible. Still, this phenomenon is also not something that he understands as a mechanistic view in the sense of causing an action: "These sorts of ruptures can happen anywhere and at any time, but they can never be calculated."[18] This also means that this moment of rupture cannot be limited to the field of art.

It is this exclusive focus on the reception of art with the resulting conclusions that become criticized by the scholar Matthew Lampert, who argues that a systematic analysis of the relationship between politics and art can only be understood via the inclusion of artistic production:

> "Art production can also be a process of emancipation, inasmuch as it can be carried out by those who 'have no place making art.' Just as the appreciation of art can, under certain circumstances, invoke the passions that demonstrate a fundamental equality of all, so too can the production of art."[19]

While he criticizes Rancière for considering the artwork without conceptualizing the artist's role, the argument brought forth by Lampert corresponds to Rancière's thinking about politics and police order. When Rancière argues that politics can be found in moments where "the boundary separating those who are born for politics from those who are born for the 'bare' life of economic and social necessity is put into question,"[20] the emancipatory potential that can be identified in the production of art described by Lampert shows that artistic production can also challenge a system of defined roles.

[17] Dasgupta, "Art Is Going Elsewhere," 74.
[18] Rancière, *Dissensus*, 143.
[19] Lampert, "Beyond the Politics of Reception," 193.
[20] Bowman and Stamp, *Reading Rancière*, 3.

To illustrate his critique and open the framework for the artistic production, Lampert shows how an analysis of the conditions of production within the context of the British DIY Punk in the 1970ies leads to a re-evaluation of the political potential of art since it "is not simply 'committed' music, but goes further, challenging the material conditions for the creation and dissemination of rock music."[21] By demonstrating how the self-organized, anti-institutional production conditions of this music are inherently related to the music itself, he argues that any clear differentiation of the categories art and politics becomes blurred: "The existence of punk songs cannot be neatly divided from the conditions of the existence of those songs"[22] Therefore, art is not only able to challenge the framework of what is understood as art, but it can also become the form of political action.

Analyzing the production of Punk music, Lampert also turns toward the differentiation between politics and police order. Doing so, he criticizes Rancière for looking at art by artists that have already been assigned a place within the police order, therefore making it *a priori* impossible to assign them any political potential beyond the police order: "Rancière has restricted himself to considering "insider" works of art—art by those whose right to make art was never in question." [23] While Lampert refers to music made in the 1970ies, there are also more recent examples that highlight how the question of production is directly related to the perception of artworks. The debates regarding structural racism within the American book industry have shown that being successful as a writer also depends on the color of one's skin (see Figure 1), proving that the possibility to produce art and become visible does depend on the position one is given within the police order.

[21] Lampert, "Beyond the Politics of Reception," 196.
[22] Lampert, 196.
[23] Lampert, 198.

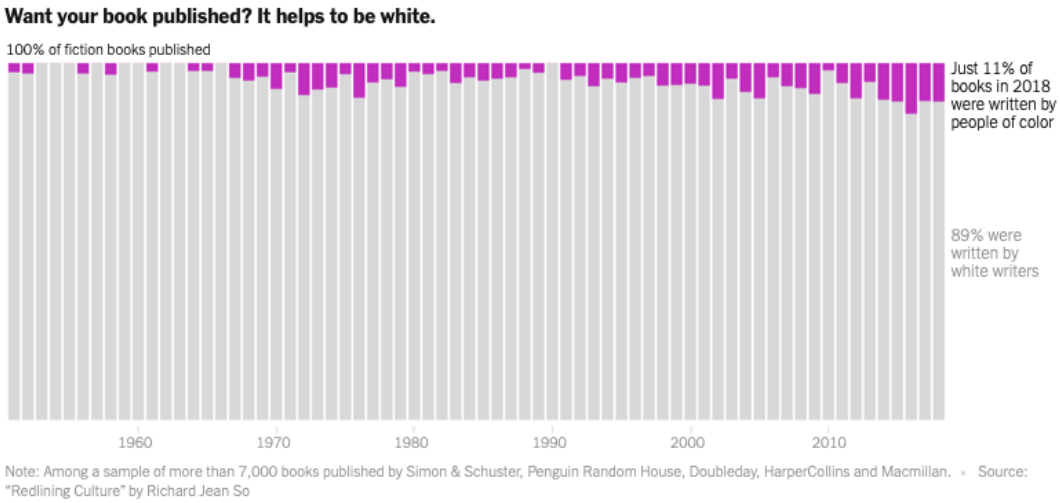

Figure 1: Statistics published by the New York Times on 11.Dec.2020[24]

As Lampert extends the relationship between politics and art toward the production processes, other factors besides the artwork itself are made accessible within the framework of politics and police order offered by Rancière. Building upon this, my research will be exploring the political conditions that are involved when it comes to the consequences that artists face for their work that make them 'artists at-risk'. I am combining Rancière's general reflections about the police order in which he states that "[i]f there is someone you do not wish to recognize as a political being, you begin by not seeing him as the bearer of signs of politicity, by not understanding what he says, by not hearing what issues from his mouth as discourse"[25] with the criticism raised by Lampert regarding the exclusive focus on the artwork and its perception when thinking about arts and politics. Out of this, the following research question with a set of three sub-questions arise when applying this framework to the phenomenon of artists at-risk:

> What do practices of institutions hosting and supporting artists-at-risk reveal about the relationship between politics and art?

[24] So and Wezerek, "Just How White Is the Book Industry?"
[25] Rancière, *Dissensus*, 38.

a. In what ways can the consequences faced by artists at-risk become illuminated within a theoretical framework derived from Rancière's concept of the police order?
b. How do these institutions navigate between politics and police orders when supporting artists-at risk?
c. How do artists-at-risk negotiate their positions toward the police orders in which they are located?

Therefore, this thesis will mobilize the shown framework to look at institutions that provide temporary residencies for artists who have been persecuted for their art. This will allow to understand how artists at-risk become visible within the police order of the states of these institutions, while it also contributes to an understanding of the relationship between artists at-risk and the states in which they are or have been exposed to these risks. Throughout this analysis, the focus is placed on the artists and not on the artworks, although it will be analyzed to what extent these artists can be isolated from their artworks. This approach follows Rancière's concept of the police order, summarized by the Scholar Nicolas Pirsoul as "an externally imposed order on bodies which dictates who can be seen and who cannot be seen, who can be heard (the ones capable of speech) and who cannot be heard, (those only capable of noise). "[26] Therefore, I will be asking to what extent artists at-risk can become political actors and therefore visible and hearable, whereas the risk is related to their artworks but does not limit their agency to the production of art.

Although it might seem *a priori* contradictory to look at institutions since they could be seen as being fully integrated into the police order, the thesis follows the argument that politics can be found in organizations that attempt to maintain the process of challenging the

[26] Pirsoul, "Identity Between Police and Politics," 250.

police order. While Lampert notices that "not all disruptions lead to *lasting* reorganization,"[27] Bassett demonstrates that the integration of institutions into police orders can be made productive within Rancière's framework since "their implementation makes police orders more vulnerable to ruptural dissent in new political spaces."[28] When looking at these institutions as contributing to the possibility of dissent (as opposed to a consensus that reproduces the police order)[29] and therefore contributing to challenging the police order, they can be understood as political actors within this framework.

Furthermore, the defined aim of locating the consequences for artists at-risk via the interviewed institutions within a framework of political theory will contribute to filling a gap within the academic literature. While writers like Rancière focus on the politics of art on a theoretical level, the literature published on the institutions supporting artists at-risk predominantly concerns the concrete work and does not – at least explicitly – ground the findings in political theory.[30] What shall be done with this thesis is to connect these two fields by mobilizing the topic of artists at-risk and supporting institutions to expand theoretical debates about the relationship between politics and art.

[27] Lampert, "Beyond the Politics of Reception," 198.
[28] Bassett, "Rancière, Politics, and the Occupy Movement," 898.
[29] See: Rancière, *Dissensus*, 42.
[30] Blackmore, "African Artists at Risk"; Jones et al., *Temporary Shelter and Relocation Initiatives*; Van Schagen, "Collaboration Between Temporary Relocation Initiatives."

Chapter 2 – Interviewing Actors from the Institutional Sphere of Artists At-risk

In this chapter, I will present interviews that were conducted with the aim of including the practical work done by institutions to support relocated artists at-risk into the introduced theoretical framework. To do so, I am first discussing the methodology, followed by three sections that group and connect the collected data. The first theme looks at the identification and support of artists at-risk. The second theme builds upon this by asking for the role artists at-risk have within their original states and the states of the institutions, whereas the third theme looks at the role of these institutions themselves.

Doing so will allow the thesis to build upon an empirical understanding of the police order(s) in which artists at-risk are located and acting in, while at the same time providing insights into the way these institutions function as places that try to (not) ascribe artists at-risk a certain role. To explore how artists at-risk become (in-)visible within the police orders of the different states is therefore linked to Rancière's concept of politics and the contestation of the distribution of the sensible caused by the police order:

> "Politics is a matter of subjects or, rather, modes of subjectification. By subjectification I mean the production through a series of actions of a body and a capacity for enunciation not previously identifiable within a given field of experience, whose identification is thus part of the reconfiguration of the field of experience."[31]

Studying the subjectification of artists at-risk via qualitative research means looking at the different spheres involved in this process of making artists at-risk (in-)visible while at the same time being able to identify and describe ambiguities as well as contradictory elements within the gained information.

[31] Rancière, *Disagreement*, 35.

2.1 Methodology and Positionality

For this thesis, six semi-structured interviews have been conducted with actors that either are or were involved in institutional processes which concern supporting artists at-risk. Some of these institutions explicitly focus on this field, some have a more general focus on politically persecuted actors, and one of the interviewed institutions does not have an explicit focus on persecuted artists but has been involved in such a process rather accidentally. All these institutions are located within Europe but the exact states have been anonymized. Every interviewed person, as well as every mentioned institution, has been anonymized due to reasons of confidentiality.[32] They will be given numbers as names (P + Number) in accordance with their appearance. The following section will proceed by looking at the interviews thematically.

Before turning toward the interview, I want to locate myself within the research. During my studies, I have been working for an NGO that supports artists at-risk across the globe. It was this experience that led to my decision on the topic of the thesis. I also revealed this to the interviewees before starting the interview since this experience had certainly informed my research, especially regarding the choice of questions. This sometimes positioned me as an 'insider' during the interviews. The researcher Brian Bourke describes the process of being an insider in the context of qualitative research as sharing "a common bond,"[33] something I noticed when interviewees assumed that I already knew parts of their answers due to my previous work.

At the same time, I was also confronted with the fact that some of the interviewees were in elite positions, which was made clear to me when the information I asked for was too sensitive to share due to potential political consequences. This elite aspect has also been present during the phase of asking potential institutions to participate in an interview, a process of

[32] Information about the procedure and dates of the interviews can be found in the appendix.
[33] Bourke, "Positionality: Reflecting on the Research Process," 5.

which the scholar Robert Mikecz writes that "[G]aining access to elites has to be carefully negotiated, which can take much longer time and higher costs than nonelite studies."[34] In the case of this paper, several institutions were not able to give an interview due to the fact that they had no time because of their actual work, which is a phenomenon also described by Mikecz.[35] This meant that it was not possible to gain access, an issue that became even more apparent the moment the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022 started and several of the institutions I wanted to interview shifted their resources to establish programs for Ukrainian artists.

Another factor that seems noteworthy when writing about my position in the research is my own activity as a literary writer. Out of my own creative practice came the question but also the belief in the political relevance and potential of art, which has not only contributed to the general topic of my thesis but has also led to me entering the field of International Relations. This was stated by me in every introduction that happened at the beginning of the interviews and placed me in the position of an insider since three of the interviewees were also artists. I can identify that this has influenced certain answers, for example, when the interviewees assumed knowledge about certain artistic practices or artists.

2.2 Theme 1: Selecting and Supporting Artists At-risk

In the conducted interviews, the process of application and selection has been discussed. It was mentioned in all interviews with institutions that explicitly host artists at-risk that they do receive more applications than they are able to provide support for. Building upon this, I asked about the procedure via which they decide which applicant needs their resources the most. Three interviewees mentioned that they were relying on other institutions regarding risk

[34] Mikecz, "Interviewing Elites," 483.
[35] Mikecz, 486.

assessment and pre-selection processes. But even in these cases, the interviewees described that they received a list of possible candidates. P1 told me that their institution is mostly concerned with providing relief, whereas the artistic work is not central during the time of the residence:

> "[T]he leading thought in this field is how we can help these people to be in a safe environment because they are persecuted in their homes. So, for example, we of course invite them to show, to showcase their work and have some public events, but they don't have to."

In another interview, P2 told me that their institution also considers the effects the invited artist at-risk will have on the public:

> "There is also a small marketing aspect: So, do people know this person? Is this name known? Is it important for us now, for this scholarship, that they also have a certain name, you know, because we finance this again and again on an annual basis, and then such things are suddenly quite important, whether financial support comes or not."

These two statements can be seen as a tension between the interest of the artist at-risk, which might not include public visibility, and the interest in the reputation and sustainability of the hosting institution.

At the same time, I was told in several interviews that there are cases in which the name of the artist at-risk is not revealed in order to prevent further disadvantages for that person. P3 explained the strategic anonymization of not only artists at-risk but persecuted actors in general as being based on the risk that "governments have such a strong interest in them that the connection to something called [Name of the institution] would in itself have the potential to make their lives even more unpleasant." In such cases, the institutions would either communicate nothing about the stay of an artist at-risk or enable them ways of working without being identified by their real name.

In all the interviews, the definition of an artist at-risk was always interlinked with persecution. At the same time, the selection process could also be influenced by the ways in which the institutions would be able to support an artist at-risk within their artistic practice, as

was highlighted by P2: “We do not want the voice [of the hosted artist at-risk] to be silenced and we want it to continue to sound. This is an invitation by us to continue the work.”

This is linked to another aspect that becomes present within the selection process: the quality of the artwork. Whereas P1 warned that there are cases where “[t]hey [applicants for residencies] have painted a picture, for example, in high school and then something bad happens in their lives and they say ‘I’m an artist, please take me,’” P2 said that in the case of a writer at-risk, it “would also be strange, so to speak, to make the selection based on the literary quality.” What is highlighted in this tension is the relevance of the production when proving to be an artist, although this does not mean being successful or popular, which would be paradoxical, since, according to the Report made by Freemuse, censorship is one of the most common threats for artists: “Silencing artists for their artwork, expression, and actions deemed critical of the authorities has been the most widespread violation of artistic freedom.”[36] Furthermore, the factor of artistic production was also described as one of the main motivations for artists at-risk to leave their countries, for example, by the following statement from P5: “Why do artists flee? So that they can make art.” This reconnects to the already-mentioned possibilities of support by institutions since it shifts the focus from the risks the artists face to their artistic practices, which becomes relevant for the hosting process.

Combining these statements, the decision on which artists at-risk should be hosted was primarily made by looking at the risk and how the institutions could contribute to providing relief and enable artistic production, but also by considering factors such as social capital and artistic quality, although these two sub-criteria do not always play a role in the decision-making process. Furthermore, the production of art was not expected to, but could be resulting in a public appearance, for example, in the form of an exhibition, reading or play.

[36] Freemuse, “The State Of Artistic Freedom 2021,” 41.

2.3 Theme 2: Artists At-risk and their Positition(s) within States

The very process of leaving the state in which an artist at-risk has been working can happen due to two reasons that were described to me during the interviews. The first one is because the concerned artist at-risk is not able to work within their country and therefore decides to leave it or has already left it to another state nearby. The second reason is the political strategy to pressure someone into leaving the country in order to make them invisible within the public sphere. One public example of the latter is, for example, the Cuban artist Tania Bruguera, who is known for her critical stance toward the government. In 2021, she "agreed to leave the country in exchange for the release of 25 prisoners. "[37] P4 also highlighted this political strategy of pushing someone out of the country in order to "neutralize" an artist that was hosted by their institution, describing the consequences with regards to the interaction with their audience:

> "He [the hosted artist at-risk] has lost his original audience, in [country in which the institutions is located] there is a small circle of interested people who want to see his art, there are also collectors who want to buy it, but of course he has nowhere near the impact he has in [country the artist had to leave]."

While artists at-risk in both scenarios are being removed from their original environment, the new context also integrates them in a way that can be understood as a politicization in the sense of being integrated into a new police order.

Whereas the illustrated case already shows that new audiences engage with the artwork produced by an artist at-risk due to the work of the institution, another process has been described in multiple interviews: The reduction of the artistic work to the factor that this art has been produced by an artist at-risk.

Depending on the institution, it is more or less explicit whether they are exclusively supporting artists at-risk. Independent of this status of the institution, the process of categorization and labeling the art was mentioned as a permanent tension and something that

[37] Di Liscia, "Tania Bruguera Agreed to Leave Cuba in Exchange for Release of 25 Prisoners."

can have very problematic consequences for the perception of the artworks, as P2 described with regards to writers at-risk:

> "Our interest is, of course, to make the program known, but then there is also a bit of conflict with the authors who are then immediately labeled as, how do you say it, 'migration writers.' That happens, and of course, we try to prevent it because whether a writer has a migration background or not doesn't say much about the work."

In relation to this topic, P5 described their experiences with the ways in which artists at-risk have reacted to such categorizations, highlighting the position of the artists at-risk themselves: "[W]e have experienced this quite a lot, the artists do not want to be portrayed as politically persecuted artists at all, but they are artists, and it does not matter at all whether they are politically persecuted or not."

Some of the institutions try to avoid this by presenting the hosted artist without mentioning their status of being at-risk, but at the same time, a categorization happens the moment the institutions are trying to get public attention for their work. While this tension is located in the public sphere, the labeling process can also become present within the institutions themselves, as described by P6:

> "That is, every time we spoke, he [an artist at-risk that was hosted by the institution] might have been an interesting writer to me, but he was first and foremost the persecuted one. And if he had applied for [the hosting institution] normally, he might not have been invited outside of solidarity reasons."

One way to deal with the public tension was to enable cooperation with the artistic scene in the country of the hosting institution. For example, it was described to me how a lecture by an artist at-risk was organized in collaboration with an actress who read out the translated versions of the text, putting both on the stage and therefore blurring the boundaries between artist and artist at-risk. Another position was shown by P1: "And even without presenting this person, this artist, as an artist at-risk, it becomes obvious from the piece of art that we have to present, that it was created in a context that is oppressive." This approach accepts that the political conditions of production are inherently present in the form of a layer of an artwork but does not reduce the complexity of the work to these conditions.

At the same time, the idea that artists can be "neutralized" by forcing them to leave the country has undergone changes due to the development of new ways of communication. In several interviews, the connectedness via the internet has been described as offering a link to the – presumably lost – audience, as P3 pointed out: "I would say, again, the Internet and social media have, of course, improved contact with your own base immeasurably." This is also something recognized and supported by the institutions that host artists at-risk, for example, by producing online formats like podcasts.

Turning toward the role artists at-risk can play within a society, the term "ambassador" was mentioned in two interviews. This seems to be contradictory to the concept of an ambassador, defined by the Oxford Dictionary as "[a]n appointed or official messenger; a person who speaks or acts on another's behalf; a person's representative,"[38] since the artists at-risk are rather officially signified as someone who is not allowed to speak. But, as P3 highlighted, this is nevertheless a function that can be acclaimed by the politically persecuted persons their institution is hosting: "[Y]ou can try to connect them with the European Parliament or the Commission in Brussels, so that then also those, who ultimately work very much in the theoretical area, have to face a practical case and sometimes even harsh critique: What you are doing is actually big crap." The function of the ambassador may therefore be realized when artists at-risk speak to the public or politicians about the situation of the countries in which they have been put at risk.

2.4 Theme 3: The Role(s) of the Institutions within Politics and Society

When analyzing the roles artists at-risk may be assigned in a different state, it is also important to look at the institutions that are hosting them and to ask to what extent they perceive their work as being of a political nature. Here, some interviewees declared their work as explicitly

[38] Oxford English Dictionary, "Ambassador, n."

political, whereas, for example, P4 stated: "I would not say that we are a political institute *per se*." One sphere in which a political element was mentioned is the process of self-identification and self-legitimization. During the interviews, this process became especially apparent when the questions concerned the interaction between the institutions and state offices. It was described to me that the recognition of the institutions by the states in which they are located becomes of great importance for several aspects of their work. P2, who mentioned the goodwill of the state offices in order to run such an institution successfully, said that the immigration offices in the country of the institution often lack categories with which to describe the status of an artist at-risk: "So he [an artist at-risk] actually falls through the cracks everywhere." As I was told, cases like this make it necessary for the institutions to convince these state offices to introduce and recognize 'artist at-risk' as a political entity.

The issue of not being recognized by the state does not only concern the processes within the state but also includes the embassies of the hosting countries. P6 told me of an incident with the consulate of the hosting country:

> "[T]he status of an artist who is invited by us is not necessarily recognized by the unsuspecting official. 'You say you are invited, but I don't see you as an artist at all, you are a …, you tinker with amplifiers and speakers, so you are a technician.' We were then able to clarify that, but such questions are also important."

The process of convincing a state office about the legitimacy of an artist at-risk as an artist at-risk is also present throughout the stay, especially at the end. It has been described to me that in cases where an artist at-risk seeks asylum within the state of the institution, the state offices sometimes become suspicious of the institution itself, suspecting that they might be "human trafficking organizations," as P2 stated.

At the same time, state bodies like consulates and embassies are included in the process of risk assessment of individuals that are in contact with the institution. P3 told me that the consulates of their country are asked for their opinion when the institution considers hosting a politically persecuted person from a different country: "[T]he impression of the diplomatic

missions is an important argument, especially with regard to the whole human rights issue." P6 extended on this by describing how political actors can not only enable but actively support the work of an institution:

> "The Foreign Office had told us *expressis verbis*: If you have problems getting your people, your guests into the country, tell us, we will intervene with our consulates, which also took place and also worked. So the Foreign Office was and is aware of how important these artists are for [Country in which the institution is located] cultural policy and for [Country in which the institution is located] foreign policy in general."

In addition to being supported by a state, it can also be the case that an institution becomes a representative of the country. P6 talked about an international cooperation on the institutional level, which first enabled the cooperation but, being dependent on the relationship between the two states, faced hardships the moment tension arose on the international level:

> "[In] my time, we said with partners from institutions that were perhaps not so friendly with their governments: We would like to cooperate with the [name of an institution] in Hungary, I come on behalf of the state of [name of the country]. And since there is still an official partnership, even despite the problems, that was already a door opener. And they canceled the cooperation with [name of an institution], which means that it no longer works because of Orbán and the political situation."

After first having looked at the relationship between institutions and the state in which they are located in, an analysis of the interviews has shown that they are also affected by the foreign policy of the country in which they are located, while at the same time being involved into the international sphere where a policy change by a different country can influence the range of their work. In the case of politically persecuted actors, P3 illustrated the often-encountered impossibility of cooperating with the authorities of the country that is persecuting them: "[O]f course you can't work with the national authorities of the country of origin of the persecuted person to be extracted. 'Dear Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran, would you issue a visa for a journalist who has been kind of stomping on your feet all the time?'" What this example shows is that cooperation between states and institutions is also dependent on the relationship between the state and the concerned person that the institution wants to support.

Facing these difficulties, one strategy that was described to me was to do political work on the international level while pretending to act apolitically. P6 told me how the process of naming something differently was strategically used to enable partnerships:

> "In my time, it worked well, and then again, in Serbia, as in Croatia, as in Poland, where there were always problems with this very right-wing government, we also supported people as part of this program who had a hard time with the government or for whom the government did not make life easy. But it was not, and this is again very important, under the motto of persecuted artists. But under the motto: this is part of our network, these are the people we work with."

Returning to the concept of the artists at-risk as ambassadors, this is also something that has been mentioned in the context of the missions that these institutions have articulated for themselves. Here, P4 talked about the general practice of hosting artists from other countries as a practice where "we not only articulate the development of globalization, but we provide artists in the most diverse parts of the world with a place of presentation here." This question of representation goes along with the process of informing the public not only about an artist at-risk, but also about the political situation of countries that the public might not be aware of.

In several interviews, the process of connecting hosted artists at-risk to an audience, especially to the local art scene, for example, by translating the work or staging exhibitions with local artists, has been described as a strategy of the institutions to interact with the public. When asked about the influence the presence of a writer at-risk has on the national literary scene, P2 highlighted the effect on the artistic production: "Yes, there is a great solidarity. And through solidarity, the head also begins to work, which then also shows in one's own artistic work." During my interview with P1, they also mentioned this moment of 'heads working,' while at the same time noting that the effect the presence of an artist can have on society cannot be seen as a clear-cut causal model:

> "I think in our case we also can accept that art can change things in the very distant future and the fact that you cannot measure it now doesn't mean that that the political art is useless or worthless or not at all important. It forms attitudes and it forms ways of models of behavior that are very important for the long run."

Summarizing the statements shown in this chapter, it can be observed that there are several ways in which the interviewees located their work as political, ranging from the interaction with (inter-)national spheres of politics to the role of spreading information and contributing to change within the domestic public sphere as well as the national art scene.

Chapter 3 – Re-thinking Art and Politics via the Consequences

In the first chapter, I established a theoretical framework by looking at the political potential Jacques Rancière assigns to art. This was further contextualized by his concepts of politics and police, whereas politics was understood as challenging the (in-)visibility of positions created via the police order. I then introduced Matthew Lampert's criticism, in which he claims that Rancière's work focuses too exclusively on the perception of art when talking about its political role, leading to Lampert extending the political sphere of art to its conditions of production. Building upon the idea that the political potential of art can be understood beyond the process of perception, the question was raised to what extent an analysis and understanding of the consequences of art can be mobilized as an analytical category to reflect on this more broadly. For this purpose, I focused on artists at-risk, interviewing six persons that work or have worked in the field of supporting artists at-risk. After having structured the information obtained during the interviews in a thematic manner, I will now integrate them into the outlined theoretical framework.

As has been shown, the main motivation of the interviewed institutions to host artists at-risk is to enable temporary relief from the faced risks. While the interviewees described their work as more or less political, the process of supporting an artist at-risk was understood as a process to provide them with an environment in which they could continue and showcase their artistic work. This can be conceptualized as countering the notion of invisibility Rancière ascribes to the 'distribution of the sensible' within the police order by creating a space that produces visibility for an artist at-risk who has not been given such a position in the police order of the country they were faced with risks. Looking at these processes, the interviews have shown that the production of art gains a central role, not only when it comes to the possibilities offered by the institutions, such as enabling collaboration with other artists and staging exhibitions, but also concerning the reasons why artist at-risk are leaving their countries.

Turning back to Lampert's case of artistic production, the political elements found in the process of production, therefore, do not only play a role in the moments that happen during the actual production of an artwork, but rather point toward an element that is overarching the artistic work. Therefore, when looking at the process of hosting an artist at-risk as a process to enable the production of art, this also means that a clear separation between production-perception-consequences is not possible. Thus, neither by looking at the perception nor the production, can the political potential of art become described to its full extent since it misses the consequences, whichare deeply embedded into the two other processes. While blurring production and perception follows the critique of Lampert articulated with regards to his analysis that "if a democratization through collective organization of a scene is the form of British DIY punk, the music is the matter,"[39] the inclusion of the consequences contributes to another moment of collapsing categories: the artwork and the artist become related insofar as the production and perception of artworks have, in the case of artists at-risk, political and physical consequences for the producer.

Here, I want to refer to the literature on performance arts, where the idea of blurring the boundaries between the body of an artist and the artwork has already been well-established, as can be seen with regard to the performance *Lips of Thomas* by Maria Abramovich in which she inflicted physical damage to her body, analyzed by the scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte as "not creating a fixed and transferable work of art that could exist independently of her."[40] At the same time, the uncertainty regarding the artist and their artwork contributes to a flexibility of roles between the audience and the artist, observed by Fischer-Lichte in "actions that transformed the spectators into actors, i.e. the physical contact with the artist."[41] Thus, the body

[39] Lampert, "Beyond the Politics of Reception," 196.
[40] Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance*, 11.
[41] Fischer-Lichte, 15.

of the artist becomes mobilized to not only incorporate the artwork but also to destabilize the position of the spectator.

Mobilizing these questions and transposing them into the context of artists at-risk shows that the body of an artist at-risk can also function as a representation of the artwork in the sense that the artist at-risk is pressured to leave the country in which they are working because of their artwork(s). When an artist becomes representative of their artwork, the potential of physical contact to turn spectators into actors can become radicalized to a form where the body of the artist becomes 'contagious' and is capable of signifying other bodies as carriers of the artistic work. In 2020, the Cuban visual artist Javier Caso was asked to come to the police station after he had visited two Cuban artists that are known for their critical stance toward the government. He recorded his interrogation at a police station in Cuba, where he was told the following:

> "Those people [two Cuban artists] that you associate with are not the kind of people that… ehm… let's see… that have a confrontational attitude or have an attitude of afront towards the Cuban revolution. So what I am saying… In associating with those people you run the risk of becoming involved in their crime. "

To which he replied:

> "Can you tell me what's the crime? "

And was given the answer:

> "Spreading some of their work. "[42]

As this example shows, the interaction with artists that the police order of a state does signify as confrontational can make other actors 'contagious' as well, making them vulnerable to consequences in relation to artworks they themselves have not produced.

After having shown that the example of artists at-risk reveals that production, perception, and consequences have to be considered as being inherently related, I have demonstrated how these relations can also identify artists at-risk and their environment as

[42]Miguel Coyula, *Actuar*, 00:02:20:-00:02:41.

carriers of their artworks. What follows from this is that the political qualities of the artwork cannot be understood without looking at the artist. This would also explain why some interviewees have highlighted that artistic quality *per se* is not a criterion in the selection process: The artists are selected due to their risks, while at the same time, this risk has also been described as becoming a layer within their work. Therefore, the consequences can become integrated within the artwork itself.

At the same time, the moment of perception becomes – to a certain extent – placed in the background when the interviewees explained that the artists have opportunities to present their work while not being forced to do so. The example of cases in which the stay of an artist at-risk is not made public at all can be understood as the institutions mobilizing the same means used by a state that deploys censorship in order to prevent the perception of an artist, with the difference that the perception becomes consensually limited in order to give room for production without immediate consequences. Therefore, these institutions are also engaging as actors in the political field by picking up the entanglement of production, perception, and consequences to re-arrange their relations with each other.

An analysis of these cases and the applied strategies also adds another layer to the idea of a police order that assigns every subject a place. In cases where artists at-risk are hindered from showing their artworks, it could be argued that they do not become visible within the police order of the states they are working in. When the institutions do keep the stay of an artist at-risk secret, they could also be described as not appearing within the distribution of the sensible. Nevertheless, by providing a temporary space, this act can be seen as contributing to a change of the police order in the future, whereas the institutions offer a space for production without consequences. This also relates to the interviews, in which it was stated that the relationship between art and social change cannot be seen as a causal process but as a dialogue that does not produce effects immediately. Therefore, by enabling production within a safe

environment for artists at-risk, these institutions can be seen as reaching into the sphere of politics, following the already-cited proposal by Bassett to analyze the potential of institutions with regards to how they can make "police orders more vulnerable to ruptural dissent in new political spaces."[43] When artists at-risk become invisible within the police orders of the states in which they are working and face consequences that hinder their work, providing a space that does not hinder them means to nourish this potential for 'ruptural dissent.'

Looking closer at the interviewed institutions and their relation to the theoretical framework, this process of making the police order vulnerable does not necessarily mean avoiding cooperation with the institutions that sustain it. The described relationship toward state offices, as well as the strategic use of apolitical terms in order to achieve their aims, such as enabling artists to enter the country of the institution or cooperate with partners in other countries, show how the institutions are making productive use of the police order of the state they are located in. When an artist at-risk is not recognized by the state office because there are no categories to describe them, these institutions can influence this decision. This power arises out of their cooperation with the states they are located in and can be utilized to claim existence for the category of 'artist at-risk,' as was shown in the interviews. While this process can be described as having been "incorporated in the police order"[44] and therefore outside of politics, which would also imply that the institutions are not challenging the police order anymore, I want to argue that they are still doing so the moment artists at-risk become recognized.

Besides aiming at making artists at-risk visible in the eyes of state offices, the institutions are also engaged with artists at-risk that wish to be publicly visible. In these cases, the interviewees have described the issue of reduction of the shown art to art that was made by an artist at-risk. This can be identified as another moment where the link between production,

[43] Bassett, "Rancière, Politics, and the Occupy Movement," 898.
[44] Pirsoul, "Identity Between Police and Politics," 250.

perception, and consequences becomes visible due to the integration of the consequences and their resulting conditions of production into the artwork and its perception. Turning toward Rancière, the described attempt by institutions to work against those reductions can be read as working against the police order that is present in the country of the institution with regards to the perception of the artist at-risk by the public. At the same time, this reveals a contradictory element within the intermediary role of these institutions: While they aim to make state offices recognize artists at-risk, they are at the same working against that categorization by the public. This form of agency can be described as influencing the police order and therefore becoming integrated into it, whereas the process of avoiding reduction is working against the co-created police order. This tension, arising out of the qualitative research, is challenging Rancière's framework insofar as it shows these institutions appear to be working within and outside of the police order, connecting again to Bassett's argument of making police orders vulnerable.

As was illustrated above, the case of artists at-risk and the consequences they are faced with expands the understanding of the political nature of production conditions, while it also sheds new light on the perception of the art produced by them. The consequences artists face, such as being forced to leave their country, do illustrate that the political potential of art does not end at neither the production nor perception-side. When understanding art as something that can be represented and spread by artists themselves, this also means clear consequences for their bodies. Following the well-established understanding that the body is a matter of politics,[45] this means that these bodies of the artists at-risk and their potential modes of agency need to be included in a framework that looks at the relationship between politics and art.

[45] For an example of how politics and bodies relate with regards to acvtivism, see chapter 3 of: Happe, Johnson, and Levina, *Biocitizenship*; For an example of how bodies of diplomats are used as an analytical category within International Relations,see: Neumann, "The Body of the Diplomat."

Chapter 4 – The Agency of Artists at-risk

As was shown in the reflection upon the consequences artists at-risk face for doing their work in the previous chapter, the bodily dimension is of importance when analyzing the way how these artists at-risk can become involved in politics. By looking at the consequences for the body of the artist at-risk, the topic of agency arises, linking this question to the field of International Relations, about which the scholars Braun, Schindler, and Wille write that "[s]ince its institutionalization as an academic discipline, IR has pondered the question of who the relevant actors are and what it means to act in international politics."[46] Drawing from the integration of the consequences of artistic production in the theoretical framework, this chapter shall try to answer these questions with regard to artists at-risk by looking at the way they are situated within the police order of the state they are working in as well as the police order of the state in which the institutions offer them temporary residence. It will be explored how the situatedness between two states offers different forms of agency depending on the police order and to what extent the role of an 'ambassador' can create links between those orders. I want to caution that the described forms of agency artists at-risk can obtain can hardly be generalized, which is why I want to highlight that the evidence for this argument is exclusively based on the gathered data from my qualitative research.

First, artists at-risk can be assigned the role of an 'ambassador,' as has been described in the interviews. This means that they cannot speak for their countries but about them. By doing so, artists at-risk are able to interact with the public sphere in the country of the institution and can therefore distribute information about potential repressive conditions present within their countries that might not be known in other parts of the world. I want to argue that this process can be described as giving testimony by sharing the lived experiences, whereas the

[46] Braun, Schindler, and Wille, "Rethinking Agency in International Relations," 790.

body of the artist at-risk and its forced presence in a different state are in themselves evidence of the oppressive conditions.

This process of a body bearing witness has been described in the context of refugees in Australia by the scholar Suvendrini Perera. She shows how the testimony given by a female refugee who was one of the few survivors on a boat that capsized in 2001 *en route* to Australia positions her as a medium and a witness at the same time: "Her body detaches itself, becomes a camera, all-seeing, recording whatever falls in its line of vision. "[47] This process of becoming a medium and a witness can be used to illuminate the ways in which artists at-risk obtain agency within the state of the institution.

When Judith Butler states that "[s]ometimes overcoming unwilled conditions of bodily exposure is precisely the aim of a political struggle,"[48] the case of artists at-risk would share this political aim, whereas the experienced exposure is mobilized within the context of another state to expose these unwilled conditions. While the previous chapter described the 'contagious' bodies of artists being treated like a threat to a police order, the shown position of an ambassador uses this element to obtain agency and spread information within the state of the institution.

In the case of artists at-risk, what happens through the interplay of institutions and artists at-risk is that an artist and their work become introduced to a new audience. At the same time, the process of leaving the country was described as a risk of losing the 'original' audience due to the geographical distance. On the bodily dimension, this is true, although, as has already been mentioned, the use of the internet has been highlighted as a possibility to stay in contact with the audience in the country they have left, therefore creating a virtual presence of the artist at-risk. Following the thoughts of Judith Butler, this digital presence has to be considered when

[47] Perera, "'They Give Evidence,'" 642.
[48] Butler, *Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, 126.

thinking about political actions: "Not everyone can appear in a bodily form, and many of those who cannot appear, who are constrained from appearing or who operate through virtual or digital networks, are also part of 'the people'."[49] By maintaining a network within the country they have left and establishing a new audience in the country of the institution, artists at-risk gain the possibility to engage with two audiences at once via different modes of communication.

Differentiating between the police order of the state of the artist and police order of the state of the institution means to see them as two police orders, whereas the artist at-risk is capable of being present in both. Due to the resistance against invisibility in the country of the artist and their reduction to the risk in the country of the institution, artists at-risk can be described as causing "'disidentification' with the existing order, and the emergence of a new subject name different from any already identified part of that order"[50], described by Bassett as a requirement for political action within Rancière's framework. While an artist at-risk can maintain contact with the 'original' audience and challenge the police order by making themselves heard, they are also contesting the ways in which they become visible within the police order of the state of the institution, causing two processes of 'disidentification.' This process of challenging the police orders does not only include the state offices and the public, but also the institutions themselves and their own police orders. As was described, the wish by artists at-risk to be recognized as artists and not as persecuted actors challenges the way how these institutions make them visible.

Following Rancière's thoughts, the positions of artists at-risk within the different police orders of the two states could be understood as revealing a tension that is able to reach into the sphere of politics by creating dissensus: "This is what I call a dissensus: the putting of two

[49] Butler, 11.
[50] Bassett, "Rancière, Politics, and the Occupy Movement," 887.

worlds in one and the same world."[51] As was shown, such a tension can also become present within the institutions themselves, meaning that the artists at-risk are challenging their positions within states and institutions at the same time. Therefore, institutions and states can be identified as fields in which artists at-risk can act in a way that constitutes politics, according to Rancière, by constituting a "rupture in the specific configuration that allows us to stay in 'our' assigned places in a given state of things" [52] Analyzing the agency of the artists at-risk, therefore, requires to first look at the ways in which they become integrated into the police order of the institutions with regards to visibility as well as categorization. As was shown, these institutions are again embedded into the police order of the state. Building upon this connectedness, the modes of interaction with the police order of the state in which the artists at-risk have been working as well as the state of the institution have to be analyzed to gain a more detailed understanding of their position(s). Taking the above-mentioned arguments into consideration, this framework of agency of artists at-risk has shown that in order to understand how an individual artist at-risk can be identified as acting within the sphere of politics, several described layers of police orders have to be considered.

[51] Rancière, *Dissensus*, 69.
[52] Rancière, 143.

Conclusion

The starting point of this thesis was the relationship between politics and art, illustrated by the case of artists at-risk. A theoretical framework was constructed by first looking at the conceptualization of politics, police order, and art by Rancière, whereas Lampert's critique was used to broaden the debate by not only looking at the perception of art but also at the conditions of its production. I mobilized this framework in order to ask to what extent an inclusion of the consequences for the production of art might also contribute to this debate. To do so, six interviews were conducted with people located in the institutional sphere of temporary relocation and support of artists at-risk. Building upon the obtained information, I have shown how the consequences that artists at-risk face contribute to a blurred understanding of the categories production, production, and consequences due to the fact that they are overlapping and inherently related to each other.

It is this demonstrated interwovenness of production, perception, and consequences that shows the necessity of including the latter in the theoretical framework. Building upon this, I provided a more detailed understanding of the relation between artistic practice and the police order(s), whereas the institutions working in this field were shown to be wandering between police order and politics via the process of creating space and working against the categorization of artists at-risk. This analysis also provided an understanding of how the bodily dimension plays a role in this discussion. Therefore, the last chapter covered the question of how to think of artists at-risk with regard to their bodies and their agency via reference to Judith Butler's thoughts on political action. It was shown how the temporary relocation, the existence within another space, can be used in order to work within two different police orders.

Furthermore, it was shown how this moment of being in-between framework provides the possibility for artists at-risk to enter the field of politics. By extending the theoretical framework via empiric research to artists at-risk, this thesis contributes to the literature in two

ways. First, it conceptualizes the phenomenon of artists at-risk to an extent not found within existing literature by linking it to the political theory of Jacques Rancière. Secondly, it demonstrates how an extension of the framework toward the consequences by artistic practices enables a further understanding of the way how politics and art interact with each other. Doing so, leads to contextualization and, therefore, re-conceptualization of the thinking about the concept of the police order due to the fact that artists at-risk have been identified as being capable of mobilizing their simultaneous presence within two police orders to gain a form of agency that creates space for politics.

The restrictions for this thesis have to be articulated with regard to the topic of artists at-risk. While the interviews with institutions aimed at highlighting the structural conditions, the artists themselves have not been interviewed. Therefore, the next step would be to mobilize the theoretical understanding developed in this paper within empirical research that actively engages with artists at-risk themselves. In doing so, another limitation present in the current thesis could be targeted: The institutions looked at are all located within Europe, while there are numerous institutions and networks supporting artists at-risk in other continents.[53]

As was shown, an analysis of politics and art has to consider the context in which actors but also institutions are located. To claim that European institutions can provide a basis for a global generalization while at the same time seeing them as the only safe spaces for artists at-risk would reproduce a colonialist logic, a tension that has been highlighted in the conducted interviews as well in recent events.

In May 2022, the intellectual Denis Yücel resigned as the president of the PEN Centre Germany, a writer's association that also supports artists at-risk. In his statement on Twitter in which he announced his resignation, he criticized the institution for inter alia reproducing colonial patterns within this program: "Writers-Exile is a great idea. But perhaps the federal

[53] Cuny, "Relocating Artists at Risk in Latin America"; Blackmore, "African Artists at Risk."

cultural commissioner can find a sponsor who can run this program more effectively and professionally, without this colonial stance toward persecuted writers that we have fought against in vain."[54] Taking these points into consideration, this thesis is able to offer a theoretical framework that would also allow to structure this debate by being able to conceptualize the different frameworks and relations artists at-risk and their corresponding institutions are simultaneously located in.

[54] Yücel, Denis. (@Besser_Deniz). *Twitter*, May 13, 2022.

Appendix

Interviews 1,2,3,5,6 were conducted in an online setting using audio and video.
Interview 4 was conducted within the institution's building.
All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The interviewees received a consent form as well as an information sheet, and they were asked to sign the consent form. Upon request, the interviewees were provided the quotations and had the possibility to edit them. The questions the interviewees were asked were structured around the themes shown in this thesis, although I want to mention that the differences between these institutions did not make it possible to standardize these questions. Therefore, I adapted the questions for every interview accordingly to the information about each institution I was able to identify before conducting the interview itself. The interviewees did not receive any compensation (financial or other forms) in return for participating in the interviews.

The interviews were conducted on the following dates:

Interview 1: 09.03.2022
Interview 2: 28.02.2022
Interview 3: 29.03.2022
Interview 4: 16.02.2022
Interview 5: 24.03.2022
Interview 6: 03.03.2022

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