

shit craft is our art

d.i.y. tactics for institutional subversion

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While we may appear to serve profit-driven systems—neoliberal academia, the cultural industries, art institutions—many of us are, in truth, striving to redirect the privileges of our positions toward spaces of collective creation and resistance to commodification. This tension is captured powerfully by Harney and Moten's (2013) insight that equating debt with credit erases the social bonds that debt once forged. How, then, might we cultivate shared undercommons across institutional and extra-institutional spheres—industries, institutions, grass-roots, etc. —where social debt remains "fugitive," animating solidarity rather than creating a "product"?

This presentation reflects on an attempt to "undercommon" a collaborative group of gender-minority improvising musicians, academics, and an industry partner. Together, we have co-created a series of D.I.Y.-style research outputs that attempted to challenge both institutional norms and artistic conventions. Through this case study, I seek to open a dialogue around undercommoning practices: how we navigate institutional constraints, gatekeeping, bureaucratic friction, and the interpersonal tensions that inevitably arise. What strategies sustain us? What failures teach us? And how might we continue building spaces where creative resistance thrives beneath the surface of dominant systems?

keywords: undercommons, zines, d.i.y., co-creation

interdisciplinary: art-based research, community-engaged research, queer studies, critical studies in improvisation

format: verbal presentation

bio:

An enthusiast of alternative cultures, a supporter of socially and politically involved arts, and a veteran fan of free improvised music and punk, I have been involved with various independent art associations across Europe and Canada over the past 20 years.

These days, I am working on a collaborative, practice-based project to help voice the experience of women and gender minority improvising musicians on the isle of ireland.