
Excess and the Edge; Popular Cultural Revival of a City

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Excess is rarely considered an asset, however Georges Bataille discusses the abundance of light as an excess of energy that can be used for growth: “Solar energy is the source of life’s exuberant development. The origin and essence of our wealth are given in the radiation of the sun which dispenses energy- wealth- without return.”¹ Nature responds generously to the gift of surplus solar energies and develops in excesses on a cyclic basis. Nature is superabundant and we are dependent on the flowing exchange of its excessive product. As custodians of nature we utilise these excesses for our benefit and our confluences of edge-exchanges of these excesses have tended to develop into cities as an excessive concentration of our own cultural activities. Our cities have therefore become concentrations of exchanges and events that offer variety, ambiguity, the strange and unique as excessive event-mental ensembles.² They are continually emerging as a spatial and cultural maelstrom of complex historic and anticipated interpretive patterns forming a desirable landscape that embraces and enables its milieu to delve into its thickness reflecting, “man’s most consistent and on the whole, his most successful attempt to remake the world he lives in more after his heart’s desire.”³



Fig1 Istanbul one of the most well-known confluences where East meets West

Our cities as excessive event-mental ensembles can be related to Alain Badiou’s explanation of events through “set theory” denying a set of all sets and emphasising the void as the originator of the unique. With these “sets” Badiou creates a method of thinking that is expansive and infinite, and that could transcend a structured situation as in “to think outside of the sets.”⁴ Through Badiou’s explanation, the city can be envisaged as a series of interrelated and ever changing “sets,” as “urban stage sets” that we are integral with as “all the world’s a stage and all the men and women merely players.”⁵ Our world, the city consisting of serial sets that are constantly becoming in terms of sets, changing sets and interactions between sets generating a fluid event-mental ensemble. This concept of the city involves a process of emergence and becoming where the city is “composed of a multiplicity of unstable organic and non-organic elements each invested with the capacity to transform the whole.”⁶ The city is then as Gaston Bachelard noted “the poetics of multiple *durées*’ coming together.”⁷

The city of Liverpool was physically born from its edge-exchange processes developing as a port city from the seventeenth century onwards. The city grew exponentially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with an excess of edge-exchanges relating to the opening up of the New Worlds in North and South America. By the twentieth century the docklands stretched over seven linear miles adjacent to the city centre. This excess of edge-exchange processes became seriously depleted after the second world war through political policies and containerization. The container port of Seaforth is the large port furthest from the city centre although it handles more tonnage today than was ever handled historically its influence on the actualities of the city in terms of economics and culture are remote. The city’s historic docklands became wastelands and this edge redundancy removed variety,

ambiguity, the strange and unique as event all of which are recognisable successful city traits. This eventually lead to militant action, strikes and “riot.”⁸

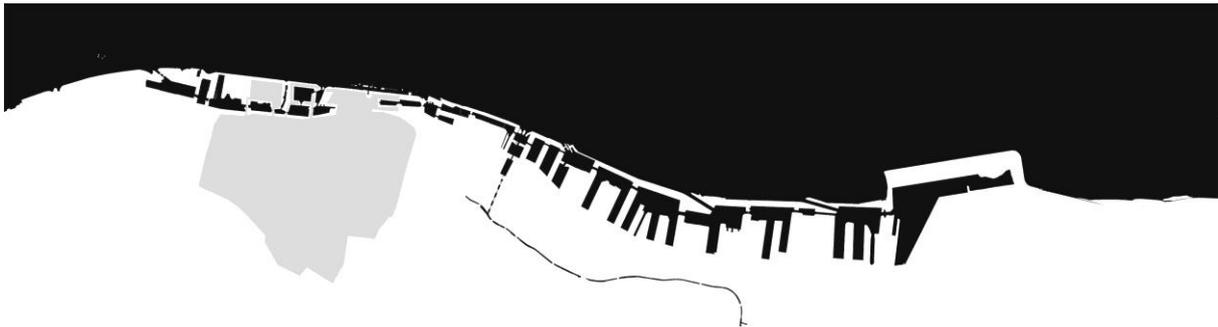


Fig 2 Liverpool's seven miles of edge exchange docklands adjacent to the city centre shown in grey

Underinvestment, unemployment, political infighting and an exodus of industry and talent following militant action in Liverpool determined a rapid social and material decline in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Large areas of the inner city remained bomb sites courtesy of the Luftwaffe, and the underappreciated and under maintained remaining architectural heritage and dockland infrastructure became little more than smoke stained, dark dilapidated grandeur. The city plunged into a “liminal defensive reaction”⁹ becoming an annexed social and political territory from the 1960s until the late 1980s, clearly expressed through national politics and media opinion of the period. Liverpool became socially excluded from the nation, its milieu the “unclear and the unclear regarded as polluting to those who have never been inoculated against them.”¹⁰

This liminal state constitutes an existence outside of the usual social sets; it's a void, a cut continuity, a gap, characterized by ambiguity, uncertainty and hope. As such it also has the potential for innovative creativity enabling “exceptional events” through intensifying the context and bringing into the open that which could not previously exist or be seen.¹¹ Events are unique and unrepeatable giving in excess, relative to the gap and the gift. The gap is the nothingness from which the event, as the gift irrupts in excess. The initial stages of this social void in Liverpool gave rise to a musical culture, “The Beat,” or “Mersey Beat,” that dominated the British pop scene for a decade. In this particular case, “The Beat,” merged in the Cavern, was honed in the Reeperbahn and the Beatles emerged uniquely for worldwide adoration and consumption on stage and screen. Cities however require a certain density / intensity to sustain cultural desirability and creativity, extended liminal periods exhaust themselves for as the void grows, through deterioration and exodus, events tend to dissipate in the voids excessive expanse rather than emerging from it.

Once termed “the pool of life,”¹² Liverpool's particularities in terms of cultural pursuits tend to reflect its industrial heritage and consequently the popular cultural pursuits of singing, dancing, drinking, eating, cinema, music hall and sport tend to predominate. Popular culture's definition is slightly illusive because its meaning is expansive in that there is more than one way to explain what popular culture actually is.¹³ Popular culture can however be said to refer to “the beliefs and practices, and the objects through which they are organised, that are widely shared among a population.”¹⁴ Its activities are enjoyable and we enthusiastically participate in them, otherwise they wouldn't satisfy their own criteria. As a consequence, they are also excessive in that they are overproduced and overconsumed and consequently have tended to be looked down on historically.

Changes in contemporary cultural acceptances have however aided Liverpool city's cultural view of itself and its national and international reputation. The French social theorist Jean Baudrillard posited the commodification of everything where everything can be bought and sold. Objects become the new religion, and we worship products, signs and role models. We become lost in our own simulations as “a carnival of mirrors.”¹⁵ Baudrillard termed this “trans-aesthetics,”¹⁶ where cultural domains lose their distinctions and collapse in on each other. The simulations are more entertaining such that the models, images and codes of hyper-reality replace the real. Liverpool's post-industrial landscape has invariably been defined by its popular cultural hauntings and anticipations and with the collapse of cultural domains, these popular cultural pursuits have attained acclaim and international recognition. Football can now be considered as an opera of two halves, if the streets of Singapore are empty, then, it's highly lightly that the entire population are watching Liverpool football team play on pub screens.

Go into any karaoke bar in the Far East and you can hear the Beatles songs being enthusiastically slaughtered every night by incongruous accents. Music, dance, food, drink, theatre, sport, art and film, together with a rich tough industrial tectonic heritage define the city's cultural character.



Fig 3 Mathew street Cavern Club demolished 1973 and rebuilt 1984 using the original cellar bricks

The prevalence of contemporary popular music and dance in 1950s post war Liverpool was mainly due to mass unemployment, there was little else for the youth of the city to do. The uniqueness of the situation was however enhanced by Liverpool's direct link to New York through the Liners and the "Cunard Yanks." During this decade, these sailors, who could in fact be almost any nationality, were a direct conduit for influential fashion and music from New York to Liverpool. They bought records of soul, blues and rock and roll over; they also played in bands and the influence was soaked up by Liverpool's troubled city's youth as there was little prospect of any normal career. The city at this time was a place of smoke stained black buildings and; "going over to America was like The Wizard of Oz: black and white into Technicolor."¹⁷ In the search for alternatives the escapist dream of a New York influenced music and dance scene was so seductive.

In the 1960s the Cavern Club dominated the scene, later in the 1970s it was the Grafton and Eric's, in the 1980s, it was The State,¹⁸ and in the 1990s, it was Nation and specifically Cream. This infers that there were - are just a few music and dance venues in the city in each of these eras. This was definitely not the case there was and is a rich music venue heritage in the city,¹⁹ the venues mentioned above are just some of the venues which could be said achieved notoriety in each decade. The 1980s was probably the depth of the city's depression with innumerable vacant city centre premises for opportunist clubs and bars. The era saw Planet X, The System, Macmillan's and the State all competing for Liverpool's alternative club crowd. It was possible to have extended clubbing weekends in a different club each night. In fact, the city had and has what could be termed fields of music venues and promenades of preloading hole's in the form of pubs and bars, between these fields. The largest of these fields is the Ropewalks.

The success of the clubbing scene in the Ropewalks during the 1990s centred around the musical revolution that was Acid house, originating in Chicago and Detroit. Acid house music became a specific event night called Daisy at the State in Liverpool's Ropewalks in 1998.²⁰ A new space called Concert Square and an increase in the student population also played an important role in the success of the area. The Ropewalks area is a former warehouse district with very narrow streets, the warehouses became clubbing spaces and the new square created space as place. Concert Square development was the initiative of "Urban Splash" at the time a young and alternative urban development company. The development lined with bars and clubs became hugely successful as a socialising space within the Ropewalks which rapidly became the largest clubbing field in the city with "Cream" as event centre stage. Parallel to this was a dramatic rise in the student population of the city during the 1990s.²¹ It soon became apparent that the city's excessive transient population formerly associated with the docks had returned as an excessive transient student population who also offered variety, ambiguity, the strange and unique. This student populations energetic escapism provided an extended market for the music and dance scene in the Ropewalks area.



Fig 4 Concert Square in the Ropewalks, a strategic urban move enhancing the areas clubbing culture

Cream as a weekly music night at “Nation” in the 1990s became the biggest club night in Liverpool. As event, it saw three thousand revellers arriving, in baggy cloth’s and bikinis, from all over the United Kingdom to partake in an all-night mass dance fest. Cream became a way of life for many revellers during this period and has now become a global brand with Amnesia, an internationally renowned dance trance club initiated in 1995 in Ibiza and Cream-fields, one of the largest international dance festivals, initiated in 1998. Cream as an international brand currently organises over one-hundred events each year on an international scene and returns to Liverpool.... Occasionally!



Fig 5 Nation, (Cream) Warehouses and sculpture “Penelope” Ropewalks Wolstenholme square 2016.

There is something about participating in popular cultural events that enhances identity and belonging, its tribal in nature, but as contemporary communities have become more dynamic this tribalism tends towards being event, rather than place based. Popular cultural events are a shared experience communing with others; generating a shared sense of euphoric solidarity as the clan / community come together in unison in support of their “totem.”²² This is as emphatic in dance-trance fests where one becomes both lost and integral amongst the field of the pulsating, breast pounding, rhythmic, writhing body-scape of Cream, as it is equally as emphatic in the soundscape of the Kop, at Liverpool’s football ground, when in perfect unison Liverpool’s supporters filling the Kop intuitively initiate a song such as “You’ll Never Walk Alone.” John Morgan, a Panorama reporter researching Liverpool’s zeitgeist in 1964 said, “I’ve never seen anything like this Liverpool crowd... The twenty-eight thousand people on the Kop begin singing together.... they begin singing... new words with one immediate huge voice. They seem, mysteriously, to be in touch with one another, with wacker, the spirit of scouse.”²³



Fig 6 Anfield Stadium ‘HOME’ of Liverpool football club, hosting operas of two halves

There wasn't a particular 'eureka' moment when Liverpool made a specific decision to adopt popular cultural events as a strategy to revitalise the city; it emerged organically and was obvious by the late 1990s. The city has enhanced existing events and introduced new events linked to its existing popular cultural strengths. These cyclical events generate a multi-cultural "festivalisation" of the city through music, dance and sport. Weekdays the plethora of clubs and bars have developed specialised nights and it's possible to go to several different events every night. Saturdays are everything everywhere, perhaps start at a Liverpool or Everton match then Concert Square and see where it leads. Sunday is brunch at the innumerable cafes and restaurants, a walk along the waterfront or in the ring of parks around the city and perhaps some Jaz at the Grapes or a concert at the Philharmonic. Annual events well there are numerous, Brouhaha Carnival, Chinese New Year, Africa Oye, Halloween Parade, Mathew Street Festival, The Grand National, Tall Ships Race, Biennial, John Moore's painting prize, Creamfields, Sound City, Liverpool International Music Festival, Liverpool Food Festival, Light Night, River Festival. These annual events are also punctuated by city spectacles such as the spider,²⁴ the puppets²⁵ and the three Queens.²⁶ The puppet's urban odyssey, a parade of giant puppets through the city, is estimated to have brought an extra twenty-five million pounds of trade to the city over their weekend performance. These urban spectacles bring the populace together, as participants in an event they reform a sense of belonging and pride in the city, its spaces and fabric, reigniting a love of place as in "Topophilia."²⁷ Nero, the Roman Emperor, knew the power of spectacle and there is debate that his so-called madness orchestrating gladiatorial spectacles for his popularity with the masses was more a desire to move beyond the materiality of things "into the sacred universe of luxury."²⁸ Nero also knew the power of architecture and urbanity as spectacle as in his "Domus Aurea" or Golden House. Our world "the city" may have become so familiar to us that we tend to forget that it also forms an enduring spectacle of organisational strategic "sets" of city constituents, exemplified by Sixtus V's Rome and Haussmann's Paris: "The city...is the point of maximum concentration for the power and culture of a community."²⁹

Even art in Liverpool developed into a popular cultural event in the form of the Biennial. The Tate a London based modern art gallery, initiated a branding of itself through satellite galleries across the United Kingdom. Liverpool's Tate of the North became one of these initial satellites in 1988. The Biennial was initiated a decade later by a number of creatives from Liverpool's Tate who foresaw art as a popularised urban event taking art out of the galleries and into the city scape. The first Biennial was in 1999 running in alternating years, as its name implies, inviting renown international contemporary artists to create art within the city's urban matrix. Liverpool's Biennial has five hundred thousand visitors over a ten-week period and remains one of the largest contemporary international art events in the United Kingdom.



Fig 7 Biennial Liverpool; Cenotaph 2018 sculpture in Exchange Flags, by Holly Hendry

Perhaps the most influential contemporary popular cultural event revitalising Liverpool centred around the city winning the 2008 European Capital of Culture in 2003. Tessa Jowell made the announcement to scenes of jubilation from the back of the room, Liverpool had not expected to win! Liverpool's bid team were ecstatic.... Sir Bob Scott, who led the bid, said: "For the first time for too long, Liverpool will represent Great Britain, when hopefully Liverpool will be the greatest capital of culture that has ever been seen."³⁰ Liverpool did the double with its waterfront becoming a World Heritage Site in 2004. Subsequent investment brought in close to two billion pounds by 2008, almost half of which came from a collaborative partnership project to redevelop the city centre. This project, which became

“Liverpool One,” started out as the Paradise Street project and was initiated prior to the Capital of Culture bid. Paradise Street had been identified as an area of huge potential as early as 1993. The 1998 report by Healey and Baker commissioned by the city, confirmed that Liverpool was dramatically short of retail space and was losing out to other nearby retail centres,³¹ and much of the city centre remained underdeveloped from the war. The strategic ambition was to develop an excessive gravitational hub of retail and entertainment over forty-two acres in the city centre, rebuilding the city from the centre out. Shopping is of course a popular cultural pursuit and we still “devote considerable time and effort to foraging, although the context is now in malls, stores, and Internet sites;”³² it’s termed retail therapy.



Fig 8 Lord Street Liverpool, objects as the new religion and retail therapy as its religious practice

Liverpool city council advertised, actively seeking a partner to develop a scheme integral with the city. Grosvenor Developments were selected in March 2000 from a list of over forty interested parties “to work in partnership to produce a development with which local people will closely identify and take to their hearts.”³³ Grosvenor were chosen because their aims paralleled the then Liberal council’s leaderships ambitions. These ambitions centred around “avoiding a mall like complex, retaining existing street patterns, listed buildings and features of interest, linking all the surrounding areas whilst respecting the changes in scale and levels, maximising permeability and creating open quality urban spaces.”³⁴ In reconstructing Liverpool’s city centre the problem wasn’t so much it’s actual construction, but its reconstruction as a destination in people’s minds. In building an “image of a city” as a brand, you have to examine the essence of that city’s character that inherently has the most alluring appeal, defining and enhancing those characteristics that have the most chance of success. With this image, the city can be marketed as a product; the image generating a conceptual origination in consumers’ minds within which the city’s complexities can unfold as it is consumed: “This image needs depth, originality and a distinctive of character... to compete in a global marketplace.”³⁵ The characteristics of Liverpool’s popular cultural branding in the 1990s was centred around music and sport, specifically concentrating on the Beatles and Liverpool football club. This image was enriched by the city’s architectural heritage including the industrial docklands waterfront, the art scene and its gallery collections and the city’s series of large hegemonic landscaped parks encircling it.



Fig 9 Panoramic of Liverpool’s heritage waterfront with the three Graces central.

Grosvenor in rebuilding the city centre wanted to link into Liverpool’s popular cultural brand. They initially approached the branding of their new city centre by creating six core aims, “Make new Rules. Involve Everyone. Love the City. Think Big. Create More. Be the Best.”³⁶ Their objective was for their development to be integral with the city, its inhabitants and its branding by creating a link

“brand” with commodity fetish and by devising the term “Liverpool One” they adopted and subsequently captured the entire city. Liverpool One as a phrase links to and captures the positive attributes of Liverpool’s popular urban cultural pursuits as well as inferring it is number one for retailers and consumers.



Fig 10 Five zones for diversity best described as Hill & Park, Valley, Boulevard, Street, Arcade

Grosvenor further developed their brand image by clearly relating the design of its new centre to our contradictory urban expectations, safe but exciting. They planned a centre that would be easy to access, clean and safe on the one hand; whilst, developing variety and ambiguity as depth to the experiential labyrinth on the other hand.³⁷ Grosvenor’s aim of multifarious complexity to express variety and ambiguity combined with their aim of integration with the surrounding context were approached through formal diversity and material solidity. These were distinctive aesthetic aims to reproduce the diversity of Liverpool city and reflect its distinctive northern industrial solidity. Five zones were envisaged best described as Hill and Park, Valley, Boulevard, Street, Arcade. Twenty-six architects were appointed competitively to achieve this variety and were expected to work within spatial, envelope and material parameters, as well as collaboratively with neighbouring architects, to promote a diverse urban experience meshing with the existing urban realm.

Liverpool One was not however developed alone; it was part of an entire city flux at the start of the millennium with European Union financed urban projects, the university’s strategic growth, and speculative entertainment initiatives. The former “what a problem” on everyone’s lips became “what a potential,” and the expectation became infectious! Although Liverpool One was not originally linked to the City of Culture, it rode on its coat-tails and is today considered the largest legacy of this “event.” There was some concern over the viability of forty-two acres of retail and entertainment in the centre of Liverpool, one of the poorest cities in the country. A concern heightened as the world economies crashed a year prior to the 2008 City of Culture and the much-publicised opening of Europe’s largest new retail development. Liverpool One opened in phases on May 29th and October 1st 2008, to a hundred-thousand footfall in each of these first days. Grosvenor took quite a risk in its “orchestration” of a substantial investment in a city struggling with image and urban re-generation problems at the turn of the millennium. They had however negotiated a two-hundred-and-fifty-year lease on a prime piece of real estate at the very centre of the city that had not been redeveloped since the war, in essence they got the icing on the cake: Grosvenor won the part with the most potential not only to rebuild the city’s fabric and image but in order to make money. As Klaus Kunzman stated “each story of regeneration begins with poetry and ends with real estate.”³⁸



Fig 11 Ropewalks regeneration area developed by BDP one step ahead of the Liverpool One project

Liverpool's city centre has been redeveloped as an excess of consumerism and for Baudrillard the simulation becomes complete through this consumption. "Baudrillard uses the sign / signifier technique to explain consumption so that what we purchase is not just a product, but also a piece of a language that creates a sense of who we are."³⁹ Consumerism plays on our wants and needs through notions of belonging. We gain our place not through geographic locations but through transitive, emotive communities referred to by Michel Maffesoli as "neo tribalism."⁴⁰ We consume in order to belong frequenting cafes, bars and restaurants that we wish to be seen within, wearing messages of which tribal group we belong to. This consumption is as Baudrillard inferred, a self-propelling system that is more about collectives than individuals as in Maffesoli's "being togetherness."⁴¹ Consumption is both a trap and a form of liberation, we are caught within the cycle but we can also choose to embrace it continuously rebuilding ourselves to belong within, and move between, social tribes in a sequential series of makeovers. Consumption of products and places is where we become both lost and integral, it is as much a communing with others generating a shared sense of belonging as with music and sport, but differentially timed.

As a centre of consumption, Liverpool One constitutes a picturesque experience of unfolding features and views; its multileveled complexity integrating seamlessly with the variable scaled, levelled and material surrounding areas of the city. Indeed, it is difficult to know whether you are inside or outside Liverpool One. The visual variety as complexity is overlaid with management policies of constant care, though it remains integral with the city's labyrinthine streets that are open by day and night. Events within the matrix are managed cyclically in line with other city wide events. The redesigned Chavasse Park hosting skating in winter and a beach in summer whilst the Christmas market with stalls of international goods generates a complex, yet intimate festive street scene.

Liverpool One is, of course, a "privately owned public space," now referred to as "Pops" these have been "popping" up in cities throughout the United Kingdom and present some serious questions in terms of our urban liberties and associated urban behaviour patterns. "Pops" are a mechanism through which cash strapped "Local Authorities" encourage developer investment, and consequently "pop goes the weasel!"⁴² They are especially numerous in London and usually have different rules than publicly owned urban spaces which is tricky as often you don't know that you are in one and don't know when or how you should amend your behaviour. Liverpool One is similar; there are no gates and / or boundaries between its thirty-five privatised streets and its surrounding context. Is it different? Well, yes; it is, although the differences are subtle. Skateboarding and cycling are discouraged, as are beggars and homeless people, there are no delivery trucks in the day, ambulances are escorted in and it is noticeably cleaner even on approach through the surrounding streets. There are also apparently four hundred cameras⁴³ and a large private security presence in the form of the redcoats who frequently intervene to reduce urban dissent. You can apparently busk in nine locations, but all of the performances are either organised by Liverpool One management or they tend towards middle class worthy charitable causes.



Fig 12 Skaters in Liverpool One celebrating two-hundred and fifty years of the Blackpool Circus.

These "privately owned public spaces" blur our accepted ownership boundaries by masquerading as normal public space when in fact they have a different set of behavioural parameters that relate to an idealised consumer citizen. "Pops" also lack a certain urban energy a diversity where activities unfold as any possibility. Urban spontaneity' and chaos have been erased as we amend our behaviour in order to avoid confrontation subconsciously aware that we are performing on an electronic panoptic stage as their idealised citizen. Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* wrote "He

who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it... becomes the principle of his own subjection.”⁴⁴ Electronic pan optics elicit “the power of the gaze as a structure of dominance, evoking a dimension of self-restraint, self-discipline”⁴⁵ a restriction of our behaviour. The problem with these spaces is that we relinquish the “right to change ourselves by changing the city... The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is...one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.”⁴⁶ Liverpool is under development, the tower cranes constructing Liverpool One in 2004 have been a consistent feature of the city’s horizon since. There remains an excess of music and dance venues within the city centre, concentrated in the Ropewalks for youthful, energetic escapism directly adjacent to the retail and entertainment centre of which Liverpool One forms a large part. The city is however changing, the former nightclub venues of Nation and the Kazimier were demolished in 2016 to make way for the hundred-million-pound redevelopment of Wolstenholme square with accommodation, hotel, commercial and café / bar spaces.⁴⁷ Similar projects are taking place in at least six other locations around the city centre apparently, billions of pounds of investment in the pipeline.⁴⁸ According to The Sunday Times, Home, “Liverpool is the best place in Britain to be a young graduate – with affordable housing, decent employment opportunities - and over three thousand seven hundred entrepreneurial start-ups in the last year.”⁴⁹



Fig 13 Wolstenholme square with sculpture “Penelope” as the remaining recognisable feature 2019

Liverpool One could be said to be the success of excess, it’s certainly popular, footfall each year has been over twenty-three million since 2009.⁵⁰ Strategically as a popular cultural activity, it complements the adjacent city areas of Ropewalks, the Central Business District, the Docklands and the Baltic Triangle creative quarter. This cumulative city centre of Liverpool has become a renewed destination of excessive popular cultural consumption as a twenty-four-seven hyperreal commodity. Liverpool One maybe a little sanitised, however the city centre holistically retains a village like feel, you can walk across it in twenty minutes, invariably meet someone you know and, well, you don’t have to walk far to find a little “creative edginess” in the Baltic Triangle, or the North Docks though today the music scenes edginess is complemented by bio and computer sciences. The strange and unique have reappeared through innumerable international students and tourism: “The strange and unique which are both dangerous and desirable, they posit a unique objectivity for reflection.”⁵¹ This is assuming that we forget that we have given a large part of our city centre away for two hundred and fifty years to excessive profits. The cultural difference between mainly Middle Eastern investors and Liverpool One’s users must be huge, but we have become inter-dependant in an investment venture for the next quarter of a millennium. “Loving the alien.”⁵²



Fig 14 Stranger in Lord Street, dangerous and desirable posing a unique objectivity for reflection

¹ Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share: Volume 1* (New York Zone Books, 1998), 28.

² Amos Rapoport, and Robert E. Kantor, "Complexity and Ambiguity in Environmental Design," *Journal of American Institute of Planners* Volume 33 Issue 4. 210- 221 (1967): Complexity and ambiguity are desirable traits we consistently prefer variability and ambiguity in our environment. Munsinger and Kessen conducted a series of visual experiments in the 1960s "they were able to conclude that adults consistently prefer variability and uncertainty in their visual and auditory stimulation although this preference ceases if pushed so far that the stimuli are chaotic" (Rapoport and Kantor 1967): 213. Munsinger and Kessen's later work showed that through training and exposure sophisticated observer's preferred greater complexity. Whilst Hebb postulated that "the sustained interest of the perceiver with a stimulus field having some familiarity, yet some novelty." Aldo Van Eyke talks about the city as a multi-phenomenon "overcoming the menace of monotony" and "man seems to move towards large cities simply because he wants to, and that he does so because it is in his nature to gather and communicate in as varied a way as possible." (Ockman and Eiger 1993) The city is a desirable landscape and we gravitate to cities in ever increasing numbers. Also, quoting Harry Munsinger, and William Kessen, "Uncertainty, Structure, and Preference," *Psychological Monographs: General and Applied*, 78, No. 9 Whole No. 586, 1-24 (1964). Also, Donald, O Hebb, *The Organization of Behaviour*. New York: Wiley and Sons, (1949). Also, Aldo van Eyck, "Steps Toward a Configurative Discipline" *Forum* 3, August (1962), reprinted in *Architecture Culture: 1943-1968*, edited by Joan Ockman and Edward Eigen, 347-360 (New York: Rizzoli and Columbia, 1993), 353-357

³ Robert E. Park, *On Social Control and Collective Behaviour: Selected Papers* edited by Ralph H. Turner (University of Chicago Press, 1967), 03.

⁴ Sebastian Huber, "Event{u}al Disruptions: Postmodern Theory and Alain Badiou," *COPAS—Current Objectives of Postgraduate American Studies* Issue 13. 1-18 (2012): 07. 'Badiou uses Zermelo – Fraenkel set theoretical system, however', "counts Russell's famous paradox among its axioms and thus forbids that there is a set of all sets, which would also contain itself."

⁵ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act II Scene VII (The Floating Press 2008), 78. Originally from the folio of Shakespeare's works (1623).

⁶ Rosanne Kennedy and Jonathon Zapasnik and Hannah McCann and Miranda Bruce, "All Those Little Machines: Assemblage as Transformative Theory," *Australian Humanities Review* 45- 66 (2013): 55. This relates closely to the French word 'agencement' in the work of Deleuze and Guattari where it infers an ongoing process of arranging / organising in which there is a flow of emergence and becoming. "Assemblage as agencement designates connectivity, a productive and transformative excess beyond representation." (Phillips J, 2006) The French word 'agencement' is referred to in *A Thousand Plateaus* by Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, it means arrangement, fitting or fixing. See Phillips, John. "Agencement / Assemblage," *Theory Culture and Society* 23.2-3 (2006):108-9.

⁷ Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas, "Lost in Transposition: Time, Space and the City," in *Henri Lefebvre: Writings on Cities*, edited by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 29. Durées are what Bachelard terms "time periods" related to undulations and rhythm's which he studied in order to understand the complexity of life, originally from Gaston Bachelard, *La dialectique de la durée* (Boivin and Cie, 1936), reprinted at the Presses Universitaires de France, 1950.

⁸ Tom Belger, "See how the Toxteth riots unfolded in vivid archive footage." *Liverpool Echo online* April 02, 2017, accessed August 17 2018, <https://www.liverpooecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/see-how-toxteth-riots-unfolded-12833480>. Also "1981 Toxteth Riots." Wikipedia last edited June 05, 2019, accessed August 17, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1981_Toxteth_riots The Toxteth riots were in July of 1981. Unemployment in the city was one of the highest in the country and racial unrest related to the 'sus' law generated a strong resentment of the police. The weekend witnessed pitched battles between police and rioters who charged the police lines with scaffolding poles and petrol bombed them. Official figures put the police injuries at 468 and the arrested at 500 with 70 buildings demolished and 100 cars destroyed, though later estimates doubled this.

⁹ Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*: (University of Chicago Press, 1961). A state of social none belonging where previously considered social orders are often questioned enabling new customs to arise. Van Gennep's work refers to tribal rites however his explanation fits Liverpool's situation appropriately as a city socially suspended by its nation.

¹⁰ Victor W. Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage," in *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, ed. Victor W Turner et al. 93-111 (London Ithaca Cornell University Press, 1967), 97-98. Turner is referencing the book by Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, Routledge Classic 2002).

¹¹ Garnet C. Butchart, "An excess of signification: Or, what is an event?" *Semiotica* 187, 333-349, (2011): also, Sebastian Huber, "Event{u}al Disruptions: Postmodern Theory and Alain Badiou," *COPAS, Current Objectives of Postgraduate American Studies* Issue 13, 1-18 (2012): also, Brent Adkins, "Deleuze and Badiou on the Nature of Events," *Philosophy Compass* 7/8, Blackwell Publishing Ltd 10.11.11/j.1747-9991, 507-516 (2012):

¹² Carl G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections: Recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffé*, Translated from the German by Richard and Clara Winston (Revised Edition, Vintage Books 1962), 223

¹³ Holt N. Parker, "Towards a definition of Popular Culture," *History and Theory* 50 Wesleyan University 147-170 (2011):150-155. Referencing John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*; (Routledge 8th edition 2018),1-5. John Storey gave Five explanations of what popular culture is: 'One. Popular culture is widely favored or well-liked by many people. Two. Popular culture is that which is left over when we have decided what high culture is. Three Popular culture is mass produced and mass consumed. Four Popular culture is that which

originates with the people. Five. Popular culture is a terrain of exchange and negotiation between dominant social groups to win consent of resisting subservient social groups.'

¹⁴ Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson, "Introduction Rethinking popular culture," in *Rethinking Popular Culture: Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies* edited by Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson 1-16 (Berkeley University of California press. 1991), 03.

¹⁵ Douglas Keller, "Jean Baudrillard (Excess)," *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, April 22, (2005): revision March 7, (2007), accessed August 17 2018, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ baudrillard>.

¹⁶ Jean Baudrillard, "Transaesthetics," in *The transparency of Evil*, translated by James Benedict, (London and New York, Verso 1993), 14-19. first published as *La Transparence du mal. Essai sur la phenomenes extremes*, (Paris Galilee 1990).

¹⁷ Tim Jonze, "Cunard Yanks: the sailors who taught Britain how to rock'n'roll," *The Guardian online* July 01 2015, accessed July 08 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/jul/01/liverpool-merseybeat-cunard-yanks-sailors-taught-britain-to-rocknroll> Tim Jones quoting Bill Harrison who became a sailor on the liners after listening to a record from a Cunard Yank.

¹⁸ Gary Brown, "The Edge of Creation," in *Competitive Territories and Design of Networks* 013 edited by Franchesco, D. Maccia, and Marichela Sepe, Rivista Monografica, 159-164 (2017): 164. "Other historic musical successes have unfortunately been dwarfed by the emphasis on the popularity of the Beatles. Billy Fury, Jerry and the Pacemakers, Cilla Black, Elvis Costello, Frankie goes to Hollywood, Echo and the Bunnymen, The Lightening Seeds, The La's, The Farm, The Zutons etc., which constitute a rich musical heritage have essentially been overwhelmed through the promotion of the Fab Four."

¹⁹ Sara Cohen and Robert Kronenberg, *Liverpool's Musical Landscapes*, Historic England 2018. This book presents many of the main influential music venues in Liverpool. There are a useful set of maps at the rear of the book which map the historic and contemporary music venues.

²⁰ Lisa Hilton, "All The Rave," *The Sunday Times Style Magazine*, 16 – 19 June 30 2019, 16. also "The rise of the State – a retrospective of the legendary Liverpool Nightclub," Getintothis' Banjo July 12 2016, accessed July 09 2019, <http://www.getintothis.co.uk/2016/07/rise-state-retrospective-legendary-liverpool-nightclub/> also Justin Hooper, "The History of Cream with Paul Bleasdale," *La Vida Liverpool* Mar 02 2018, accessed July 08 2018 <https://www.lavidaliverpool.co.uk/history-cream-paul-bleasdale/> Acid house or Rave music has been termed a revolution "it was a democratic version of the first summer of love, offering the Bohemian pleasures of the elite to the many." (Hilton, L. 2018). House music came from the Chicago - Detroit scene to the North-West of England in particular. In Liverpool, it initiated in the State as "Daisy," then moved to Quadrant Park or the Quad when the State was raided and closed. The Quad became an all-night venue possible due to the fact that no alcohol was sold and therefore circumvented the licensing laws in Sefton (a location outside the city center). The popularity of the House scene soon brought new venues back to the city center at the 051 club until eventually the DJ, s James Barton, Darren Hughes and Andy Carrol, who had met at the Quad and 'partied at the Hacienda in Manchester', initiated Cream in the Ropewalks area in 1992 in order to have a similar control over the experience.

²¹ Mike Ratcliffe, "The end of the binary divide: reflections on 25 years of the 1992 Act," *Wonkhe* April 04 2017, accessed July 09 2019 <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/analysis-25-years-on-the-higher-and-further-education-act-1992/> Many of the former Polytechnics following a Government policy change became Universities in the Nineties and proposed an education available to all and consequently grew rapidly over the next decade.

²² Ian Fillis and Craig Mackay, "Moving beyond fan typologies: The impact of social integration on team loyalty in football," *Journal of Marketing Management* 30: 3-4, 334-363 (2014): 338.

²³ Paul Doyle and Barry Glendenning, "The joy of six: football chants," *The Guardian online*, May 06 2016, accessed July 09 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/football/blog/2016/may/06/the-joy-of-six-football-chants>.

This is a quote from John Morgan a Panorama reporter sent to the game for a now infamous special they were doing about the city's contribution to the cultural zeitgeist in 1964; The entire quote reads as follows.

"I've never seen anything like this Liverpool crowd... The Twenty-Eight Thousand people on the Kop begin singing together; they seem to know intuitively when to begin. Throughout the match they invent new words, usually within the framework of old Liverpool songs, to express adoration, cruel or bawdy comments about the players or the police. But even then, they begin singing these new words with one immediate huge voice. They seem, mysteriously, to be in touch with one another, with 'wacker,' the spirit of scouse."

Liverpool fans were notorious for their singing at football matches a ritualized support that was soon adopted by all football clubs both here and abroad. Their signature song is a cover by Gerry and the Pacemakers in 1963 of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein original show-song written for the climax of their Broadway musical *Carousel* in 1945. A copy of their cover was apparently given to Bill Shankly and played on their team bus in a pre-season tour and the song has become the teams signature song. As for the term 'wacker' the spirit of scouse? The author has not heard this used, it seems to mean a spirit associated with 'confidence and swagger' that Liverpoolians are said (by others) to possess. For the purpose of this paper it is assumed its either an old scouse word no longer in common use or somehow the use of 'wack' as in "all-right-wack" (ooritewack) when greeting someone you know has been misinterpreted?

²⁴ Lynn Gardner, "La Machine," *The Guardian online*, Sept 08 2008, accessed July 09 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2008/sep/08/theatre.europeancapitalofculture2008> The spider or "La Princesse," was designed and operated by "La Machine" a French art performance company. The spider was part of the City of Culture celebrations in Liverpool 2008 with the spider walking through the city centre watched by thousands of onlookers over a two-day period.

²⁵ Turner Ben, "The Giants in Liverpool 2018 - RECAP all the pictures and action from the Royal de Luxe street theatre puppet spectacular," *The Liverpool Echo online*, Oct 08 2018, accessed July 09 2019,

<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/live-giants-liverpool-2018-wirral-15235297> These giant puppets have visited Liverpool on three occasions in 2012, in 2014 and in 2018. The puppets are designed and operated by the French event company "Royal de Luxe."

²⁶ Alison Freeman, "Cunard liners mark 175th anniversary in Liverpool," *BBC News online*, May 25 2015, accessed July 09 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-32836087> Cunard's Three Queens, the Queen Elizabeth, Queen Victoria and Queen Mary 2, visited Liverpool creating a spectacular dance of three ocean liners sailing up and pirouetting in the river Mersey May 24-26, 2015 for the 175th anniversary of the famous cruise line. Thousands watched this celebration of the birth of Cunard in Liverpool as part of the River Festival.

²⁷ Yi, Fu Tuan, *Topophilia. A Study of Environmental Attitudes and Values* (Columbia University Press 1974), 04. Topophilia is "the affective bond between people and place or setting." (Tuan Y, F. 1974) The term is particularly apt when referring to "Fansumers" and their relationship to their stadia as in Liverpool's Anfield stadium which has been rebranded 'HOME' of Liverpool football club.

²⁸ Mark Featherstone, "Luxus: A Thanatology of Luxury from Nero to Bataille," *Cultural Politics* Duke University Press 12, no. 1. 66-82 (2016): 72. "Of course, Champlin (2005) makes the case that much of what has passed for Neronian excess was actually realpolitik concerned with the destruction of rivals and elevation of the people to a political force." Featherstone however considers that, "Despite all of the base pleasure, the sex, violence, torture, and murder, the objective of what we might call the imperial carnivalesque was the transformation or transgression of profane materiality into the sacred image no longer bound to thingness. It is this escape from thingness that forms the hard core of Nero's obsession with luxury." 'Luxury revolves here around the death of self as mater and a new being appears exceeding itself.' Chaplin, Edward. *Nero*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2005)

²⁹ Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities*: (New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc. 1970), 03.

³⁰ "Liverpool named European capital of culture," *Press Association; The Guardian online* June 04 2003, accessed August 17, 2018. <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2003/jun/04/communities.politicsandthearts1>

³¹ David Littlefield, *Liverpool One; Remaking a city Centre*: (John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 28. Healey & Baker are now part of Cushman and Wakefield their report formed the strategic thrust for what was to become Liverpool One. See, "The Challenge, Liverpool One Liverpool City Council," Cushman and Wakefield Accessed August 17, 2018, <http://www.cushmanwakefield.co.uk/en/case-studies/2014/03/liverpool-one>.

³² Daniel Kruger and Dreyson Byker, "Evolved foraging psychology underlies sex based differences in shopping experiences and behaviour." *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology*, 3(4) 328-342 (2009): 338.

³³ David Littlefield. *Liverpool One Remaking a City Centre* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2009), 78. Liverpool one aims in areas by Grosvenor Estates. "A multi-use entertainment and retail complex containing 234,000m² of floor space including 130,000m² Retail and Restaurants, 2 Department stores of 22,000m² and 17,000m², 21,500m² Leisure, 500 Residential units, 377 Hotel rooms in two hotels, 3000 Car parking spaces and, 2.2 Hectares of open space."

³⁴ Erwin Heurkens, *Private Sector-Led Urban Development Projects*, Architecture of the Built environment; (Ontwerp: Sirene Ontwerpers Rotterdam 2012), 296.

³⁵ Berci Florian and Hans Mommaas and Koen van Synghel and Michael Speaks and Marco Vermeulen and Véronique Patteeuw (Editor), *City Branding: Image Building & Building Images* (NAi Publishers, 2002), 20.

³⁶ Ayo Daramola-Martin, "Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* Vol. 5, 4, 3, 301- 311(2009), 306.

³⁷ Susan M Bredlau, "A Respectful World: Merleau-Ponty and the Experience of Depth," *Springer, Science+ Business Media B*, V. 411- 423 (2011), contrasting with Amos Rapoport and Robert, E Kantor, "Complexity and Ambiguity in Environmental Design," *Journal of American Institute of Planners Volume 33 Issue 4*. 210- 221. (1967). City is edge-mental and event-mental reflecting an underlying structured edge condition system associated with our activities and expectancies as preferences of perception. These perceptual preferences appear however to be in a contradictory state. We develop a perceptual distance between ourselves and the perceptual landscape, accommodating many of its patterns in schemata, whilst preferring complexity and ambiguity in the perceptual landscape? This ontological contradiction is also reflected in the social structuring of the city's inhabitants. Nurses, policemen and sanitary workers help maintain a structured distance of the perceptual landscape by keeping sickness crime and rubbish at bay, whilst contradictorily artists, actors and designers venture to generate a complex and interpretive experiential landscape of cultural events. This excess as city landscape is a desirable creative destination, "creative people seek out ambiguous situations and visual fields" (Barron, F. 1963) and consequently creatives tend to gravitate to city realms. Frank Barron, *Creativity and psychological health*, (D. Van Nostrand, New York, 1963).

³⁸ Klaus Kunzman, Keynote speech to Intereg III Mid-term conference, Lille, (19 November, 2004), 02. In Evans, G. "Measure for Measure: Evaluating the Evidence of Culture's Contribution to Regeneration," *Urban Studies* 42- Nos 5/6 959-983 (2005): 959.

³⁹ Danielle Todd; "You Are What You Buy: Postmodern Consumerism and the Construction of Self," 465, UHH University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Hawai'i Community College 48 – 50, *HOHONU* Vol. 10 (2012), 48.

⁴⁰ Simon Dawes; "Introduction to Michel Maffesoli's from society to tribal communities," *The Sociological Review Publications Limited*, Vol. 64, 734–738 (2016), 735. "For Maffesoli, postmodernity involves a move away from individualism towards a new aesthetic paradigm of communal feelings, and of temporary / transitive and motional / affective communities."

⁴¹ Michel Maffesoli, *The Time of the Tribes*, (London: Sage, 1996), 81. The privileged state of the crowd as an empathetic event based on a 'being togetherness' that energises individuals in a communing binding them into a transitory "Neo-Tribe."

⁴² "Pop Goes the Weasel: What Does It Really Mean?" Miss Cellania, August 27 2015, accessed July 09 2019, <https://www.neatorama.com/2015/08/27/Pop-Goes-the-Weasel-What-Does-It-Really-Mean/> "Pop goes the weasel", popping was known as pawning and weasel is considered to be cockney rhyming slang weasel and stoat, meaning a coat. The Eagle was a pub in London and its probable that the song refers to the practice of pawning your Sunday best coat so that you could continue drinking, repurchasing it on Friday or Saturday when most people were payed. This maybe an urban myth but the phrase and its meaning also signify a 'just like that' incident. Consequently, its appropriateness as a comment on "Pops" as this is of course what has been done by the Local Authorities, "just like that" they have pawned our public spaces for innumerable years in order to interest development companies' investment in our city centres.

⁴³ Helen Carter; "Policing the retail republic", *The Guardian online*, May 28 2008, accessed 08 July 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2008/may/28/regeneration.communities>

⁴⁴ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books 1979). The entire quote reads, "He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection."

⁴⁵ Ivan Manokha, Surveillance, "Panopticism, and Self-Discipline, in the Digital Age," *Surveillance and Society* 16(2): 219-237. (2018); 221-223

⁴⁶ David Harvey. "The Right to the City", *'New Left Review'* 53, 23 – 40 October (2008): 23.

⁴⁷ Ord Mathew, "Milestone Reached on 100M Liverpool Development," *Insider Media Limited*, April 03 2019, accessed July 09 2019, <https://www.insidermedia.com/insider/northwest/milestone-reached-on-100m-liverpool-development/>;

⁴⁸ Alistair Houghton, "Here's why there are so many CRANES in Liverpool city centre," *The Liverpool Echo*, November 26 2018, accessed July 09 2019, <https://www.liverpooecho.co.uk/news/business/heres-many-cranes-liverpool-city-15460058>

⁴⁹ Melissa York, "Degrees of Freedom," *The Sunday Times Home*. August 18, 2019. The article discusses affordable lifestyles and city centre living all of which are possible in Liverpool as it has remained a reasonably economic location not only in terms of rent but also in terms of public transport and popular cultural entertainment.

⁵⁰ "COS to launch regional flagship at Liverpool ONE," *Grosvenor News -views*, Grosvenor's online news – views sheet, April 17 2018. According to its own figures this has recently exceeded 29 million yearly. I.e. in 2017, accessed August 17 2018, <http://www.grosvenor.com/news-views-research/news/2018/cos-to-launch-regional-flagship-at-liverpool-one/>

⁵¹ Georg Simmel, "The Stranger," in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, Translated and Edited by Kurt H. Wolff, 402-408. (Glencoe, Illinois The Free Press, 1950), 404.

⁵² "Loving the Alien," Pushing ahead of the dame, Dec 14 2014, accessed August 17, 2018. <https://bowiesongs.wordpress.com/2011/12/14/loving-the-alien/> David Bowie is said to have written this song as a comment concerning misinformation and religious dogma and centred it on the crusades, as in many of his songs it's a comment on the misuse of power: "For Bowie, the Church is the ultimate Saviour Machine, having the same contempt for the people that it's allegedly serving." Contextually here it is used to mean the alienation between the financiers of Liverpool One and its users. Loving the alien refers to an obvious discomfort at giving away control of the city centre despite the obvious fact that it is and must be a saprophytic relationship the owners are reciprocally dependent on our support for its continued success. It attempts to draw a parallel with objects of desire as the Post-modern saviour machine.

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