

George Context ~ Affordable Housing And The Future Of London As A Creative City



Flickr/401(K) 2012. Some rights reserved.

The question of how to mitigate, let alone solve, the problem of London's cost-of-breathing crisis, sorry, cost-of-living crisis seems inescapable, like a perverse and all too real Millennium Prize Problem. It appears as though we have bound so far down an economic cul-de-sac, justified on the quasi-religious neo-classical truths of supply and demand and global competition, that advertising a £450,000 one bedroom flat as 'ideal for first time buyers or as a *pied-à-terre*' is apparently perfectly acceptable. The problems this plight presents are real and well discussed - homelessness, families evicted by unscrupulous buy-to-let landlords (who are perhaps second only to investment bankers in the UK's Most Despised Persons list), and overcrowding. What estate agents gleefully herald as 'gentrification', the newly elected Labour leader evocatively decries as 'ethnic cleansing'. However, I want to consider this housing crisis from an alternative perspective, one informed as much by my career as a musician as it is by my academic desire to understand the operation, and consequences of, contemporary creative markets in urban contexts. I want to question the cultural ramifications

of this housing crisis; the artistic implications of a farcical situation whereby, for example, Help to Buy is required by magic-circle lawyers - as per a great friend of mine recently. In short, what does the housing crisis mean for art, and for the future of London as a creative city.

Read

more: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/george-context/affordable-housing-and-future-of-london>