

POSTCARDS FOR THE FUTURE:  
collectible memories of a gallery that will vanish  
through gentrification

## INTRODUCTION

Once it is produced, a postcard creates an inevitable connection within the history of any city by displaying its main features and reinforcing attractions that it wants to be remembered for. Photographers have an important part in this process by using their skills to provide us memories of a beautiful skyline sunset, green parks or a recollection of main historical buildings. On the other hand, this material has to follow a "life cycle" that is only completed when it is put into circulation. For many postcard buyers, it is not an easy task to elect that special printed image that will match the intended juxtaposition with the text to be written on the back. Thus, postcards can be seen as this overlaid media to where the stories we want to tell and the images we select to display them converge.

This "Postcards for the future" project aims the future, but not in the way that the science-fiction author Isaac Asimov (1986) showed us in *Futuredays*. In this publication Asimov organizes a series of futuristic postcards designed by Jean-Marc Côté and other nineteenth century French artists that imagined how the world would be like by end of the year 2000. On the other hand, the mentioned future in the title of this essay is about the preservation of the memory of Red Gallery, in Shoreditch, London, that will undergo a gentrification process and will vanish from urban space. Those who, in the next years, walk in this area with these postcards in hand will experience the same feeling that a visitor of one of the *Invisible Cities* of Italo Calvino would have.

In Maurilia, the traveler is invited to visit the city and, at the same time, to examine some old postcards that show it as it used to be: the same identical square with a hen in the place of the bus station, a bandstand in the place of the overpass, two young ladies with white parasols in the place of the munitions factory. If the traveler does not wish to disappoint the inhabitants, he must praise the postcard city and prefer it to the present one, though he must be careful to contain his regret at the changes within definite limits. (Calvino, 1997: 26)

Invisibility is an intrinsic characteristic of any city. Among the everyday subtle changes, like a tree that was cut or a building that had its colour changed, there are others that are more tragic such as the destruction by their enemies or submersion by natural catastrophes. In this way, gentrification can be understood as a kind of contemporary intervention that has been eroding cities and displacing people in a global scale. Faithfully, destructions leave behind some sort of remains. "Postcards for the future" is a limited series of 90 postcards that combines pictures of the last trace elements of Red Gallery with testimonials of some people that used to attend its functions to be written on the back. Although the implosion of this gallery is inevitable, the distribution of this material aims to preserve aspects of its physicality and social importance, as

a memory that comes back from time to time, preserving its past existence.

Actually, since the word "gentrification" was used by Ruth Glass, in 1964, its association with different levels of invisibility is present. In her article, she says that the advance of gentrification process leads to **displacement** of working class occupiers and **changes** in the social character of a district. The author also mentions the **absence** of the poorer enclaves of Hampstead and Chelsea that were taken over by upper-middle class (Glass, 1964 cited in Lees et al., 2010:7, emphasis not in the original). This discussion is extended to recent studies. Sarah Schulman states that gentrification is about "the **removal** of communities of diverse classes, ethnicities, races, sexualities, languages . . . With this comes the **destruction** of culture and relationship, and this destruction has profound consequences for the future lives" (Schulman, 2012:14, emphasis not in the original).

The substitution of a gallery which cultivated social and culture advances in Shoreditch by an upmarket chain hotel will, probably, bring unpredictable consequences. Following this, all we can do for the moment is acknowledge some studies that affirm that the greater the difference in socio-economic status, the more marked will be the change in an specific environment (Lees et al., 2016) alongside other examples that show us the importance of culture as an urban regeneration agent (Gainza, 2016) and in creating new forms of employment (Hutton, 2009). Red Gallery was not a white cube closed within its walls. It was a rare combination of music, art, gastronomy, outdoor parties and social engagement that brought the sense of belonging into a community. In this regard, gentrification can be seen as a "displacement process, where wealthier people displace poorer people, and diversity is replaced by social and cultural homogeneity" (Lees et al., 2016).

The five sections of this essay are devoted to the following tasks. Initially, THEY will focus on Red Gallery history and its emergence as a creative district using the three stage gentrification process proposed by Zukin and Braslow (2011). The subsequent section will be about the development of images and texts of the mentioned "Postcards for the future" and their related actions. Finally, in the conclusion, there will be considerations about some of possible future effects of gentrification (Atkinson, 2000).

## **THE LIFE CYCLE OF RED GALLERY**

Before we start the analysis of the Red Gallery trajectory, there is need to go back in time in order to provide a context for its impact in the neighbourhood. For at least a hundred years, Shoreditch was considered a territory yet to be discovered outside Central London. In 1882, this area called the attention of the writer and philanthropist Sir Walter Besant who registered his

impression regarding that "in a city of two millions . . . there are no hotels! That means, of course, that there are no visitors" (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:19). In the same direction, the contemporary memories of Ernesto Leal, one the Red Gallery's founders, pointed out that "not only was it hard to buy a pint of milk, there were so few local shops, but the area was also infamous for its far-right politics. The National Front's headquarters were on Great Eastern Street until the early 1980s" (Anthony, 2018).

The signs of the transformation were felt gradually over the years. Firstly, it was determinant the creation of the Anti-Fascist Action (AFA), in 1985, to repress the activities of the far-right and fascist political party National Front (NF) (Poulter, 2014). Also in the 1980's, The Tool Box secret gay parties in the London Apprentice's basement drew the attention of celebrities like Jean-Paul Gautier, Marc Almond, Lily Savage, Sir Ian McKellen, and Freddie Mercury (Best Venues London, 2018). Finally, Leal calls mention two other issues: the attendance, in 1993, of artists like Tracey Emin, Gavin Turk and Gillian Wearing (now known by the notable designation of Young British Artists) to sell their wares on stalls in Shoreditch, and the Westminster council's decision to restrict bars in Soho and Covent Garden in the early 2000's, which arose the interest in the East Side to be a new headquarter for this kind of business (Anthony, 2018).

After this brief retrospective that ends in the first decade of this century, we can say that Shoreditch has eliminated some of its political and social barriers and has the particular conditions to attract artists and creative entrepreneurs. Indeed, culture is one of the key elements that have underpinned the regeneration of inner cities in the past decades by hosting cultural and artistic events (Bianchi and Parkinson, 1993; Paddison, 1993, cited in Gainza, 2016:953) but at the same time, such cultural enterprises have a dubious long-term value since they "shine-and-burn" an area by triggering gentrification processes (Pratt, 2009 cited in Gainza, 2016:956).

For the purpose of this essay, the reference used will be the three processes in the emergence of creative districts proposed by Zukin and Braslow (2011). In order to better suit the subject covered, they were renamed from group migration, building reputation and creating visual representations on the streets to migration, calling attention and gentrification, respectively.

## MIGRATION

The day Ernesto Leal entered in that derelict building in Shoreditch, whose property owners are the Forbes-listed Reuben Brothers, his motivation was to find an office for his project "East End Promise":

I wanted a place where people could bring in their photos, memories and artifacts which document the regeneration of this area. I wanted to explain how all the cultural migrants - the artists, designers, musicians, photographers, film-makers, fashion people - found themselves here and why. The contributions came flowing once we set-up. It was RED's trigger. (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:23)

"You want it, for three months? . . . Make sure you reach the community" was the landlord answer (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:11). By accepting his offer, Leal engaged his migration towards this space motivated not only by the area's image and, social networks, but influenced by what Ganzia (2016) called economic conditions, say, affordable rents. The first step of Red gallery's cycle had been done. Nonetheless, the fact that led Red to its almost eight year existence, becoming a pioneer of mixing street food with art exhibitions, street art interventions, family-friendly events, night-time culture and admired by both Londoners and tourists, which is remembered by Yada Krampol, the other Red's founder as a fate chance: "We were all lucky to be here when landlords with empty properties needed to start paying rates" (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:14).

Once the environment was set, artists and other cultural entrepreneurs migrated to Shoreditch and provided what was called "the material and symbolic resources that facilitate creative activity" (Lloyd, 2004, cited in Gainza, 2016:955). The Red Gallery was not just a public space but a creative hub that established several connections within the local community and outside its boundaries. As a gallery, it has created

an expanding archive of international subcultural movements, curated numerous keynote exhibitions, events, screenings, and talks, and has been the host of local community workshops . . . and on the rooftops Red Gallery was one of the first to join the Urban Beehive programme. (Made in Shoreditch Magazine, 2018)

Last Days of Shoreditch offered a pop-up food and music venue and considered a Red gallery's sister establishment. Located in an outdoor area, just beside the gallery, it was a place for social relations and taste and sound experiences (Made in Shoreditch Magazine, 2018). "In the evenings, we have a strong local crowd who just love to eat, drink and party! It's truly a great space of entertaining", said Tom Reaney, one of the its usual regulars (Red Gallery and Allison,

2014:72).

One of the first signals after a successful migration are the symbols that are usually accompanied by these changes such as graffiti and other expressions of public art because they build an atmosphere of being different and alternative (Gainza, 2016:955). Since 2010, the Red Gallery's exposed façade held one of the most concentrated collections of quality street art in the world, featuring some of the biggest names in street art, say, Banksy, Ben Eine and Thierry Noire (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:189). In 2012, these same walls were used by displaying enlarged drawings of the St Monicas School's students that were encouraged to portrait their feelings about the neighbourhood. About this experience, Violet Richardson, St Monica's headmistress related that "It was brilliant to see the children being so proud of the area" (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:240).

Together with imagery, Red gallery also activated networks and key processes for innovation. Leal is known for his serendipity devotion: "We don't tell anyone what to do. They get shocked by that . . . We're getting this space very cheap and we want to share that freedom to encourage creativity in an area where space is now at a premium" (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:11). At the same time, Red Gallery offered one of the first co-working spaces in the region, ahead of the Google Campus and WeWork; Soundcloud was one of the first tenants to move in (Made in Shoreditch Magazine, 2018). This creative business incubator which sheltered many tech start-ups was called Red Quarters.

We could say that the migration covered a period of nearly two years. It was the time needed to inspire new social forms of action and interaction with the public, revitalise the local economy by supporting artists careers and other related businesses, change the colours and vibrations of the surrounding area and build a strong identity based in music, arts, food and by fostering spaces of fun, inclusivity and collaboration. Since the beginning Red gallery was designed to remain a "live gallery, documenting the now for the tribes of today" (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:19).

## **CALLING ATTENTION**

This second phase did not start in a specific point in time. It would be more accurate to say that it overlaid the migration process in many occasions and, as we will see in the next section, will be present during the gentrification. Nevertheless it can be seen as if the migration stage reached another level and that is why its analysis is separated in this essay. By 2012 The Red Gallery had been assimilated by its environment and the consequences of this fact started to be felt.

As creative districts evolve, they attract attention from the media and other consumers outside the creative community. Their evolution into a hype area has often unanticipated consequences for the local community and cultural producers themselves. (Gaiza, 2016:956)

It is known that inflow of artists and new enterprises have driven an insistent revaluation of inner-city property (Butler and Lees, 2006, cited in Hutton, 2009) and that these cultural producers in general trigger gentrification processes by attracting to more affluent consumers that share their aesthetic values and lifestyle (Zukin and Braslow, 2011, cited in Gaiza, 2016). The Red Gallery was a powerful combination of parties, art exhibitions, festivals, music and fashion shows, film screening, gastronomy, talks and symposiums with impressive media results. Ben Eine was commissioned by Red Gallery's founders, Ernesto Leal and Yorda Krampol, to share some of his single letters to decorate Red Gallery's entrance. "A few months later, Eine's work was gifted from the Camerons to the Obamas - making Ben Eine the first British Street Artist to have his work hung in the White House" (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:189). Tom Burger Bear was one of the chefs who led Time Out! to dub Red Gallery outdoor's entertaining area as being the birthplace of 'The New Food Revolution' (Redgalleryldn, 2018). It is also important to mention part of its corporate clients which cover a wide range spectrum, from education to beverage and food: Danone, L'oreal, Microsoft, Atari, Nokia, Soundcloud, Concha Y Toro, Westminster College, RCA (London), Central St Martins, Kingston Art College, Camberwell Art College, Goldsmiths University, (Redgalleryldn, 2018).

Being credited a Purple Flag status, which means that Red Gallery had met or surpassed the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night time economy, opened a new path for better planning and executing its activities. The licensing consultant Liam O'Hare remembered this participation in this process:

I was brought in as the police closed the market the year before for licensing breaches. It was clear Red had a great and original idea to host a night market but maybe not the right partners to run such a large scale event in a built up town structure ... It was my role to ensure the business model was sound as well as programming the food traders, DJs, and one-off events such as Hackney Wicked . . . and most importantly we were delivering a free public space in the town centre during the Olympics when every hotel around us was charging extortionate prices, we managed to give something free and use the 22.000 square feet to to promote street food, music, art as well as celebrate the summer. (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:94).

Another reason for a parted analysis of the "calling attention" phase is its importance in

predicting the next areas to be gentrified. One of the measurements that has been used is the visibility in social media. Cambridge University researchers used half a million tweets and Foursquare check-ins in over 40,000 venues from 2010 and compared them with deprivation scores and concluded that the prime areas of gentrification in the next five years would be Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Hammersmith and Lambeth (Rodionova, 2016). It is not possible to determine how Red Gallery influenced these data in Hackney, borough that includes Shoreditch, but it certainly helped to increase not only the quantity but also the diversity of the attendance in the area. According with Desislava Hristova from Cambridge University's Computer Laboratory: "We found that the most socially cohesive and homogenous areas tend to be either very wealthy or very poor, but neighbourhoods with both high social diversity and high deprivation are the ones which are currently undergoing processes of gentrification" (University of Cambridge, 2018). The "celebration culture" promoted by Red Gallery probably influenced other gentrification studies based in photographs that are uploaded to social media. Data scientists looked at millions of images taken by people at events, such as festivals, cinemas, art exhibitions, music shows and museums across the capital over the past decade, which they said can help measure prosperity. Again, Hackney was one of the names that surfaced in the research (Blunden, 2018). The gentrification stage was just a matter of time.

## **GENTRIFICATION**

As we could see, Red Gallery's story started with a three months-length contract that became an eight year revolutionary cultural enterprise in Shoreditch. After the successful migration period and strong support of local inhabitants, general public and the media, there came a time where the Last of days of Shoreditch venue, actually, met its last day. Red Gallery and Last days of Shoreditch will be cleared away for the construction of an 18-storey, 300-bed hotel by upmarket chain Art'otel, a multinational Park Plaza group (Anthony, 2018). Paul Sakollsky, artist and curator that developed important works at Red Gallery reported the moment of this turning point:

The reality came down pretty fast into what ever so briefly had the utopian edge, in the form of a god almighty, phenomenally expensive business rates bill courtesy of an unbending council, who wanted the money immediately . . . This unfortunately put a brake to a good many projects that we would no doubt managed to pull off, and which might have possibly created something of lasting cultural significance. (Red Gallery and Allison, 2014:173)

This Gentrification stage is supported by several authors. As rents rise, property capital flies to the area and the first urban pioneers are replaced by other groups with greater economic capital for investment (Ley, 2003, cited in Gaiza, 2016). Smith (2007) even compares the 19th-century



frontier expansion in United States of America with the urban redevelopment brought by gentrification and concludes that both aim the target of capital accumulation and cultural abuse. On the other hand, gentrification is not only geographical changes. Displacement is likely to be one of its core issues. In wake of this, we can mention other studies that alert that the alleged upgrade of the inner-city area comes with the displacement of low-status occupants by higher-income groups (Scott and Marshall, 2009, cited in Gaiza, 2016) and that, due to the rehabilitation of a working-class and derelict housing, the economic status changes and transforms the area into a middle class neighbourhood (Smith and Williams, 1986, cited in Lees et al., 2010:348). In the Red Gallery case, it may be questioned if it is legitimate and fair to vanish this building from the landscape and send its pioneers out of the territory where throughout the years they helped to evolve so positively.

Leal feels the area has been branded as 'artsy and creative' but points out the ironic fact that 'hardly any artists live here, they can't afford it'. Touching on rising property prices that are climbing feverishly fast and overpopulation, he sees it as a stark contrast to Shoreditch in the 90s, when it was 'so empty, you could knock on every door and there would be no answer'. (Mantock, 2016)

As if marks the beginning of a new era, the disappearance of Red Gallery's installation and human connections is linked to rules that will benefit the new migrants. The Hackney council announced an extension of the special policy area in Shoreditch that makes it harder to open new bars and institutionalized restrictions on opening hours, with midnight curfews for all new venues (Anthony, 2018). Today, December 1st of 2018, the Red Gallery still stands but we are not allowed to go inside anymore. The gentrification stage is now complete and over its physical remains there will be, from now on, only images, texts, memories. The "Postcards for the future" that will be displayed in the next section is a way to celebrate the trajectory of this Gallery (and an alert about the invisibility promoted by gentrification).

## **"POSTCARDS FOR THE FUTURE" PROJECT**

Aside Calvino's (1997) inspiration for this essay, I owe to other artists the admiration on how they treated (in)visibility of urban space. In Detachment, Sophie Calle (2013) interviewed inhabitants of the former East Berlin, to whom she asked how they reacted to the disappearance (actually they were removed, in order to legitimize the new period after the fall of the Berlin Wall) of various political symbols, monuments or commemorative plaques. She worked over the traces that remained and replaced their absence with the memories that were left behind. In the same way, the Spanish group of artists of the Left Hand Rotation created the "Museum of the Displaced". As an open action, they hung in different buildings commemorative plaques with the official city logo, remembering fictitious neighbours displaced by the

gentrification process. One of the plaques stated: "In this pavement Joseba Lasuen, a poor and unlucky man, used to pass his time before the neighbourhood suffered a gentrification process that displaced him somewhere else" (Gaiza, 2016:963).

The pictures were taken by me on November 8th of 2018 and the messages written on the back were collected from the book published by the Red Gallery (2014). Also on the back, there will be my e-mail and a link for the hashtag #postcardsforredgallery on Instagram. I created this spin-off on Instagram in order to provide, for a person with a postcard in hands, more context about this project and access to the whole extension of this work. Following I will present the pictures and texts of each postcard and make some comments about their choices.

# POSTCARD 1

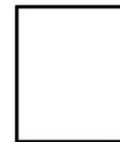


## Postcards for the future

collectible memories of a gallery that will vanish through gentrification

For me, it [Red Gallery] felt like an oasis from the crazy and seemingly relentless of Shoreditch. Within minutes of walking through those doors, the life outside peels away and no longer matters. There are a few places that I can think of that has that effect.

Ernesto Leal



an homage to RED Gallery (2010-2018)

*"Postcards for the Future" is a project created by Tom Lisboa. More information: [tom.lisboa@hotmail.com](mailto:tom.lisboa@hotmail.com) or [#postcardsforredgallery](https://www.instagram.com/postcardsforredgallery) on Instagram.*

*This picture was taken on November 8th of 2018 at 1-3 Rivington Street, EC2A 3DT, London.*

*This postcard series was printed on December 2018.*

*The text was extracted from the book RED, written by Red Gallery and Kirsty Allison and published by Red Gallery & Ourhistory, 2014.*

Figure 1 - This is first of the two wide shots taken. Since it is located in a corner, I wanted to display both façades. The first postcard message is an homage to Ernesto Leal, one of the Red Gallery's founder. The first one is for the pioneer.

## POSTCARD 2

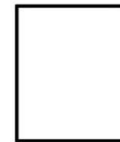


### Postcards for the future

collectible memories of a gallery that will vanish through gentrification

It is a real mixed bag, in the day, it's office workers, digital crowd, coders, designers etc . . . And in the evenings, we have a strong local crowd who just love to eat, drink and party! . . . It's truly a great place for entertaining. . . . Music, food, good times! This is what trade at RED is all about.

Tom Reaney



an homage to RED Gallery (2010-2018)

*"Postcards for the Future" is a project created by Tom Lisboa. More information: tom.lisboa@hotmail.com or #postcardsforredgallery on Instagram.*

*This picture was taken on November 8th of 2018 at 1-3 Rivington Street, EC2A 3DT, London.*

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Figure 2 - Covered of graphic interventions in its walls, I chose, among several options, one that reminded me "getting wild" and, at the same time, that the gentrification danger is approaching. Tom Reaney's citation reinforces the importance of the party times at Red Gallery.

## POSTCARD 3



### Postcards for the future

collectible memories of a gallery that will vanish through gentrification

One of the great things about Red . . . was the interesting and vibrant mix of different people, generations, cultures and disciplines, as also the great party atmosphere we almost always managed to create.

Paul Sakoillsky

an homage to RED Gallery (2010-2018)

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More information: tom.lisboa@hotmail.com or  
#postcardsforredgallery on Instagram.*

*This picture was taken on November 8th of 2018 at  
1-3 Rivington Street, EC2A 3DT, London.*

*This postcard series was printed on December 2018.*

*The text was extracted from de book RED, written by  
Red Gallery and Kirsty Allison and published by Red Gallery &  
Ourhistory, 2014.*

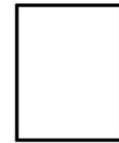


Figure 3 - In my opinion, the intercom has a strong symbolism. It contains in itself the absence and the impossibility of connecting the outside world with people inside the building. Paul Sakoillsky's citation, in this case, was chosen to create a contrast and not a reinforcement of the image.

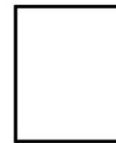
POSTCARD 4



**Postcards for the future**

collectible memories of a gallery that will vanish through gentrification

This is driven by imagination, passion and pure force of will. RED should continue as long as there are spaces available to carry out cultural guardianship, there are enlightened landlords who can see the benefit of hosting such pursuits and town centre managers who share our vision and appreciate our efforts . . . I will always be around to support the RED Project. Liam O’Hare



an homage to RED Gallery (2010-2018)

*“Postcards for the Future” is a project created by Tom Lisboa. More information: tom.lisboa@hotmail.com or #postcardsforredgallery on Instagram.*

*This picture was taken on November 8th of 2018 at 1-3 Rivington Street, EC2A 3DT, London.*

*This postcard series was printed on December 2018.*

*The text was extracted from de book RED, written by Red Gallery and Kirsty Allison and published by Red Gallery & Ourhistory, 2014.*

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Figure 4 - Together with graffiti and stencil paintings we can now see signs of gentrification, like this poster that mentions that the building is an Art’otel property. The Liam O’Hare statement about the availability of cultural spaces, again, was chosen to contrast with what is seen.

## POSTCARD 5



### Postcards for the future

collectible memories of a gallery that will vanish through gentrification

Some of the best DJs have been here [RED Gallery], the atmosphere has been second to none. Chilling on the Roof Terrace with close friends has been amazing . . . the art, the talks, the summer markets, the arguments. My daughters cuddle to thank me for her thirteen birthday party - priceless.  
Juan Leal

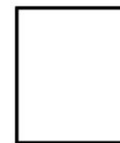
an homage to RED Gallery (2010-2018)

*"Postcards for the Future" is a project created by Tom Lisboa. More information: tom.lisboa@hotmail.com or #postcardsforredgallery on Instagram.*

*This picture was taken on November 8th of 2018 at 1-3 Rivington Street, EC2A 3DT, London.*

*This postcard series was printed on December 2018.*

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Figure 5 - It shows another intervention about the gentrification process. It generates an interesting connection with Juan Leal's statement. At the same time he says that his experience in Red Gallery was priceless, the actual picture displays a for SALE sign.

## POSTCARD 6



### Postcards for the future

collectible memories of a gallery that will vanish through gentrification

It [RED Gallery] has an awesome rooftop. The building has a great history, with its ever changing exterior and list of artists who have collaborated within these walls. If the hotel redevelopment ever happened, I'd like to think that the last pieces of work created would find good homes rather than just be destroyed.

David Adams

an homage to RED Gallery (2010-2018)

*"Postcards for the Future" is a project created by Tom Lisboa. More information: tom.lisboa@hotmail.com or #postcardsforredgallery on Instagram.*

*This picture was taken on November 8th of 2018 at 1-3 Rivington Street, EC2A 3DT, London.*

*This postcard series was printed on December 2018.*

*The text was extracted from de book RED, written by Red Gallery and Kirsty Allison and published by Red Gallery & Ourhistory, 2014.*

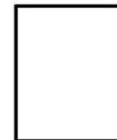


Figure 6 - This second wide shot taken shows another point of view of the Red Gallery. David Adams' statement closes this postcard sequence with a wish that will hardly be taken into consideration by future owners.





Figure 7 - Postcards for the Future printed

"Postcards for the future" is a limited series of six postcards (Figures 1 to 6) with fifteen reproductions each (the number of copies could be higher but due to the limited budget of this enterprise this limit was set), printed on cardboard paper, size 10,5x14,8cm, making a total of ninety printings (Figure 7). Some of the postcards will be handed to Goldsmiths teachers and the RED gallery owners and some will be left in the surrounding areas of Red Gallery for the general public. These postcards will carry, like we saw in the previous six examples, two invisibilities caused by the gentrification process: the building and the memories of people that attended its functions. Actually, the building together with its personal memories will always be connected, like the two sides of a coin. Or the front and back of a postcard.

## CONCLUSION

The advertisement around new constructions sponsored by large corporations frequently intends to sell us a positive impression with messages such as "the future is being built before your eyes" or "a new kind of experience is coming". Very soon, Red Gallery's area will be hidden from our sight, covered by the same kind of advertisement and, in a few years, the future will be unpacked in the shape of a hotel. The issue then is: Aside the marketing point of view,

what kind of memory for the future gentrification can bring? Richard Atkinson (2000, cited in Lees et al., 2010) in his studies about hidden costs of gentrification in Central London tell us about at least four consequences. Firstly, the change in the profile of local residents for a richer community, as he noticed in Camden and Kensington, affected the offer of facilities subsidised by a local authority, like public transport and good libraries. It was also noticed an increase in crime levels due to the breakdown of close-knit communities. Another aspect is the decrease of people's involvement in local government causing a knock on effect on voluntary groups that are based in the borough. Finally, the new wealthy residents demand for a more sophisticated infrastructure that increases the cost of living or distend the scope of shopping trips. Thus, it is clear that the replacement of a gallery engaged in provide creative and inspiring relations within the neighbourhood by an enterprise whose function is to host temporary, unknown and richer people will probably reaffirm some of the conclusions of this research.

"Postcards for the future" is a project dedicated to Red Gallery, whose story of disappearance allowed us to think about some of the gentrification processes and effects. This text together with the postcards that soon will be circulating and sharing memories of this place are a humble attempt to go against oblivion. The postcards have a long tradition not only regarding to communication but for being collectible and allowing us to compare the past with the present of a city. Invisible city Maurilia seems to embody this nostalgia about the interferences in the urban space.

If the traveler does not wish to disappoint the inhabitants, he must praise the postcard city and prefer it to the present one, though he must be careful to contain his regret at the changes within definite limits: admitting that the magnificence and prosperity of the metropolis Maurilia, when compared to the old, provincial Maurilia, cannot compensate for a certain lost grace, which, however, can be appreciated only now in the old postcards. (Calvino, 1997)

On July 31st of 2018, Red Gallery said goodbye to Shoreditch with a party. And "Postcards for the future" is a way to celebrate its memory.

## POST SCRIPTUM

In order to use the statements on the back of the postcards, the book I was using as reference requested Red Gallery's permission for this purpose. I had my first meeting with Ernesto Leal on November 2018 and not only had his approval but the Postcards for the Future project was published at Red Gallery on Instagram (Figure 8) and, by the end of January 2019, an event on their Facebook will be created to deliver the sixty postcards I donated for the general public.

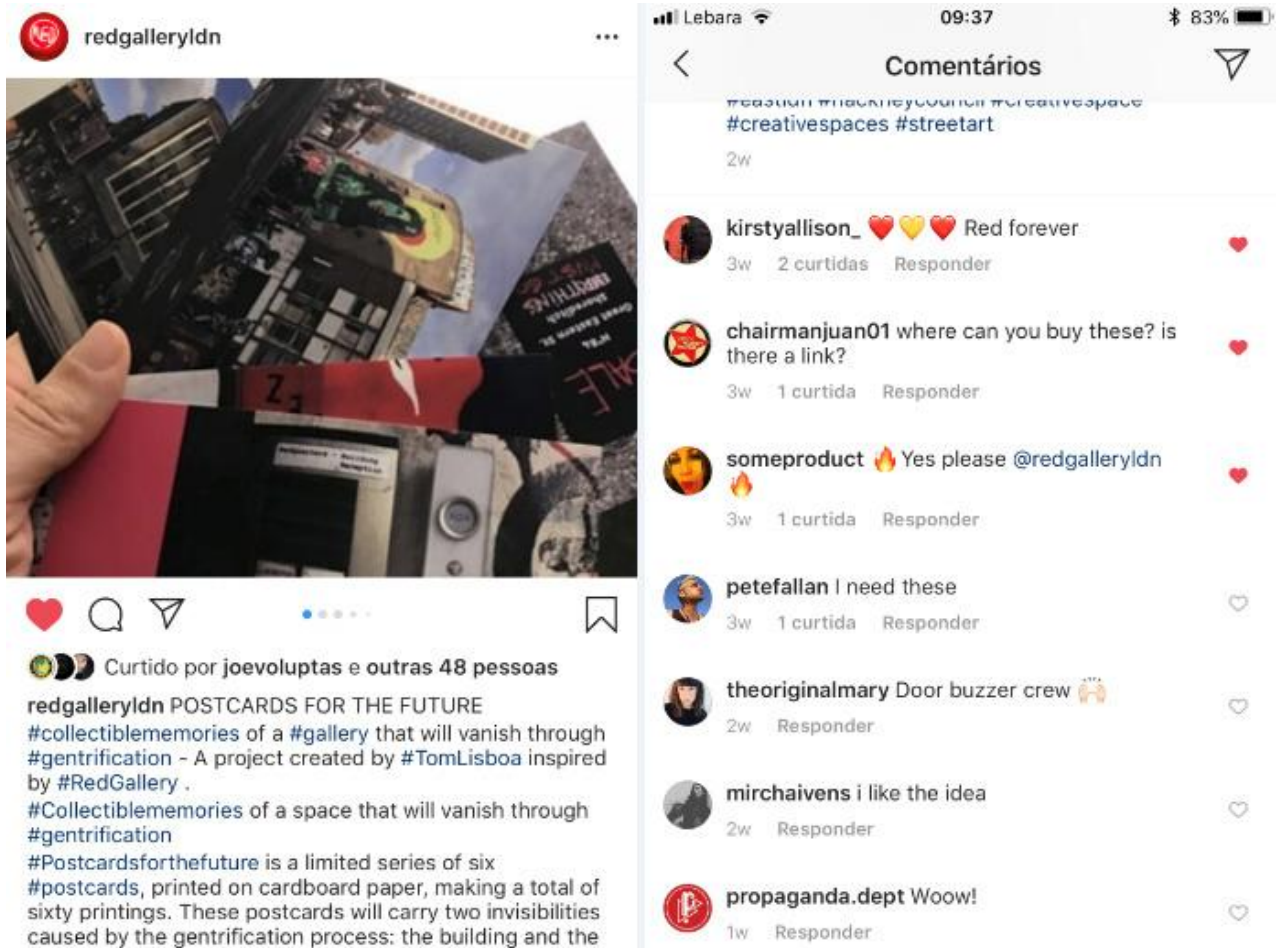


Figure 8 - Postcards for the Future project published on Red Gallery profile on Instagram @redgalleryldn

Word counting: 4.680

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