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Monumental Endeavor

GLENN LIGON, DIEDRICH DIEDERICHSEN, AND JULIAN ROSE ON THOMAS HIRSCHHORN

THIS PAST JUNE, a sprawling, jerry-built plywood protrusion sprang up in the middle of a South Bronx housing project with the suddenness of a mushroom patch after a spring rain. Residents of the Forest Houses must surely have wondered where this “monument” to Italian Communist philosopher Antonio Gramsci had come from, what it was doing in their neighborhood, what to think of the profusion of philosophy lectures, poetry readings, performances, radio shows, and art workshops the structure would host from its opening on July 1 to its closing on September 15, and, most of all, what exactly to make of its creator, the cartoonishly bespectacled, internationally renowned Swiss artist THOMAS HIRSCHHORN, who had descended on the Forest Houses as if from outer space and remained

a daily presence throughout this artwork-cum-community-center’s ephemeral existence, only to vanish with the same abruptness with which he had first appeared.

With a mind to addressing such inquiries, artist GLENN LIGON and architectural critic and *Artforum* senior editor JULIAN ROSE visited the *Gramsci Monument* and took its cockeyed measure, while critic DIEDRICH DIEDERICHSEN perused the artist’s collected writings, published in English this past August, in hopes that they, too, might shed light on the urgent questions the last and most ambitious of Hirschhorn’s four tributes to Continental thinkers raised—about the role of the artist, the function of art, and the very viability of public space today.



Thomas Hirschhorn, *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Romain Lopez.



Above: Thomas Hirschhorn leading "Art School: Energy=Yes! Quality=No!" at his *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, August 16, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.

Left: Construction detail of Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.

Right: Copies of the *Gramsci Monument Newspaper* in the "ambassador's office" at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.



Above: The Internet Corner at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, July 1, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.

Right: DJ Baby Dee and Romain Lopez in the radio studio at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, September 11, 2013. Photo: Chandra Glick.



Thomas Is a Trip

GLENN LIGON

AT A CONFERENCE ON MULTICULTURALISM a long time ago and far, far away, the critic bell hooks declared, “Love will take you places you might not ordinarily go,” and, indeed, it was Love that propelled Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn to locate his *Gramsci Monument*, 2013—the fourth and final iteration of a series of artworks dedicated to major writers and philosophers—at the Forest Houses in the South Bronx, a New York City Housing Authority complex of fifteen high-rise buildings encircling a vast, albeit ill-maintained, green space. It was not love of the projects per se, however, that led Hirschhorn to get down uptown, but his love for what he has called the “non-exclusive audience,” one that might be encountered in urban areas outside the confines of galleries and museums, such as those operated by the Dia Art Foundation, which sponsored his installation. Perched atop a large platform, the *Gramsci Monument* consisted of a cluster of

shack-like plywood pavilions that contained a radio broadcast station, a library, an exhibition space, an art workshop, a café, and an Internet room, as well as a stage for lectures and performances. The compound operated seven days a week under the full-time supervision of the artist and curator Yasmil Raymond (as Dia’s “ambassador”) until mid-September, when it was dismantled and its parts given away by lottery. I visited a few times before then, but it was admittedly hard to just “visit” the *Monument* the way one might visit, say, Dia:Beacon, for the site brought home the fact that we live within radically unequal zones of privilege and access in relationship to art. While Hirschhorn must have situated the *Monument* outside the art centers of Manhattan in part to make precisely this point, I hoped that he had come correct to the Forest Houses. I hoped, that is, that the *Gramsci Monument* was not just one more example of an art project, exhibition, or biennial trading on

the frisson, if not the love, of encountering the “Other” in a troubled urban space.

If I felt uneasy about Hirschhorn’s choice of site, it was because it was almost too perfect. Located in the poorest congressional district in the nation and devastated by high unemployment rates, drugs, arson, and failed urban policies, the South Bronx in the 1970s and ’80s became a global symbol of inner-city decay, visited by no fewer than three US presidents looking for a suitable backdrop to express their concern for the plight of poor and working-class people. Although the neighborhood’s fortunes have changed somewhat since those grim days, the area continues to struggle with the challenges brought on by poverty, pollution, high rates of incarceration, and the ongoing effects of the AIDS crisis. And although the residents of the Forest Houses would certainly be able to tell if someone was pissing on them and calling it rain (to borrow Reverend Al Sharpton’s memorable phrase), I could not help but think that the more utopian aspects of Hirschhorn’s project were directly colored by considerations that went largely unnoted in the press release and manifestos I found on the *Monument’s* website. Hirschhorn’s desire to “encounter the Other through an Idea”—to use art as a catalyst for interaction and cooperation—was certainly made all the more vivid by his choice of the setting in which that encounter occurred.

“But does the community even want this?” a friend asked when I told him about the *Gramsci Monument*. Based on the fact that Hirschhorn had been invited to build it in their midst, my answer had to be yes—especially given that the artist had met with the residents of dozens of other housing projects before he received an invitation from Erik Farmer, a long-term tenant of the Forest Houses and president of its residents’ association. In Farmer, Hirschhorn found a charismatic, engaged, and respected community figure, one willing to give him the benefit of the doubt. “Thomas is a trip,” Farmer replied with obvious affection and amusement when asked about his first impressions of the artist. It was Farmer’s embrace of



New York City Housing Authority rendering, ca. 1960. Center: McKinley Houses (formerly Forest South Houses). Top left: Forest Houses.

Opposite page: Thomas Hirschhorn, *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.

I hoped that the *Gramsci Monument* was not just one more example of an art project, exhibition, or biennial trading on the frisson of encountering the “Other” in a troubled urban space.

Hirschhorn’s evangelical zeal and his own curiosity about Gramsci’s life and writings that led to the decisive offer to host the project. Along with two leaders from the Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Centers (headquartered at the Forest Houses)—Clyde Thompson, director of community affairs, training, and employment, and Diane Herbert, executive director—Farmer helped secure the Housing Authority’s approval for the artwork and encouraged the residents to work with Hirschhorn, despite the fact that most of them had never heard of the artist, or of Gramsci, for that matter.

As much as this spirit of openness and cooperation was a response to Hirschhorn’s passion, it also had to do with the character of the neighborhood. Although the South Bronx was brought to the brink of destruction during the late ’70s and early ’80s, a strong tradition of community pride and cultural innovation exists there, one that made the residents of the Forest Houses willing to go on this “trip” with Hirschhorn. My uncle Tossy remembers seeing Billie Holiday and Thelonious Monk perform in nightclubs in the neighborhood in the ’40s and ’50s. The rapper Fat Joe, who grew up in the Forest Houses, recalls watching Grandmaster Flash, one of the pioneers of hip-hop, doing DJ sets in the parking lot across the street from his building in the mid-’70s. Besides the musical

genius, the neighborhood has produced a MacArthur Fellow, a former four-star general and secretary of state, and a current Supreme Court justice. When Hirschhorn stepped into the projects, he tapped directly into the estimable cultural, emotional, and intellectual resources—vastly underutilized ones, I might add—that the community already possessed.

He also—let’s be real—tapped into a “want” closer to the one my friend had asked me about, a want that had little to do with art. “No romance without finance” is the chorus of Gwen Guthrie’s 1986 hit “Ain’t Nothin’ Goin’ On but the Rent,” and the Forest Houses residents’ calculation to welcome Hirschhorn was inevitably based in part on concrete considerations that were just as important as the intangible benefits of having the *Gramsci Monument* located in the hood. One of those was the jobs (albeit temporary ones) that the *Monument* would bring to a neighborhood with an unemployment rate of 21 percent and an overall poverty rate of 43 percent. Other factors included free Internet access (the projects aren’t wired), increased maintenance of public spaces (“they mowed the grass for the art,” one resident told me), heightened security (in the form of guards hired by Dia), and the promise of children’s workshops and field trips that would keep local kids from running the streets. So, in addition to offering



Besides all that brown plastic packing tape, what held the *Gramsci Monument* together were human encounters. And, to be sure, Hirschhorn gives good encounter.



Performance at the Gramsci Theater at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, July 1, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.



Erik Farmer and Thomas Hirschhorn in the Forest Community Center, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, March 2013. Photo: Kelly Kivland.

a library and an exhibition devoted to a communist philosopher, the *Gramsci Monument* also delivered considerable financial and institutional resources that the residents strategically used to their advantage. That these benefits were attached to an artwork was likely immaterial to their recipients, but they certainly spoke to the complicated ways in which they saw Hirschhorn as having more to offer than passionate words to make the art happen.

Reflecting on my friend's question, I cannot help but think that as an artist of color I was expected to be particularly in touch with the community's needs, just as most would expect Hirschhorn to be ignorant of them. And the fact is that I was positioned differently in relation to the questions that the *Gramsci Monument* posed about audience and agency. At our first meeting, Farmer had asked if I would give a lecture on one of the days when the residents programmed the *Monument's* activities, explaining that because I am a black artist, my words would be important for the residents to hear. While I was flattered to be asked and accepted the invitation (noting that there were, at the time, no other visual artists listed on the impressive roster of scholars and poets scheduled on the *Monument's* website), doing so implicated me in Hirschhorn's project in a way that I had not expected, and I was unsure how to navigate this transition from audience member to participant. In fact, the invitation to write about the *Monument* for this magazine had already complicated my relationship to it, provoking in me some notion of journalistic rigor at odds with the desire to just hang out. But, in truth, I was implicated long before either of those entanglements arose, and this is likely what prompted my friend's question about the community

members and occasioned Farmer's invitation for me to address them: I'd grown up in the Forest Houses.

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?" asked a white artist best known for the painted plaster body casts of black and brown residents of the South Bronx that he affixes to exterior walls in the neighborhood. "I'm here because Thomas asked me to come see the *Monument*," I replied. "Also, I grew up in the Forest Houses." "Well," he said, glancing disdainfully at my white shirt and designer shoes, "you don't dress like you're from here." Setting aside his essentialist and mildly racist notions of what colored people from the South Bronx do and do not look like, I realized he was asking a question I had certainly asked myself: What *am* I doing here, back on the block for the first time in more than three decades?

Although I spent my formative years in the Forest Houses—my family moved there in 1959, the year before I was born—we relocated to a smaller, less chaotic housing project in the northeast Bronx in the mid-'70s, returning to the neighborhood only occasionally, to visit elderly relatives or to attend a funeral. But even when I lived in the Forest Houses, I was often elsewhere. After a kindergarten teacher at the public school across the street told my mother, "Your child might be smart here, but at a *real* school he'd probably just be average," my mother promptly found a private school on the Upper West Side of Manhattan that was willing to give me a scholarship, concluding that a three-hour commute was a small price to pay for a future not bounded by such low expectations. Like many poor and working-class parents of her generation, she believed that education was the ladder to a better life, even while worrying about what I

might leave behind on that upward journey. She was anxious that sending me to a predominantly white school might cause me to lose my connection to the black community, a community that had shaped and nurtured her. It's not that she feared I would forget that I was black; she feared I would forget that white people weren't everything. It was an act of love to send me off every morning, her concern for my psychic well-being balanced by her faith that my teachers wouldn't steer me too far off course and her trust in my ability to differentiate piss from rain.

From a very early age I was shy and bookish and knew that the life I wanted might exist elsewhere. Books became a means of travel. Later I turned to making art. Although my mother didn't fully understand my artistic ambitions, she encouraged them by sending me to pottery classes in Greenwich Village and drawing classes at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She imagined that knowledge of art might make me a well-rounded citizen if not necessarily a living. Only well into my twenties did I "come out" as an artist, leaving my job as a proofreader at a midtown law firm for the uncertainty of a full-time studio practice. And only later still did I recognize the ways that the books my mother brought by the boxful to our apartment in the Forest Houses had laid the foundation of an artistic career filled with so much text.

Given my childhood history and my long absence from the neighborhood, what was it, exactly, that compelled me to come to the projects again after all these years, when nostalgia, a sense of obligation, or a desire to "show the projects love" had not? It was *art* that brought me back to the Forest Houses—not my own but Hirschhorn's. This irony was not lost on



Jeniece Jenkins (far left) and Lex Brown (far right) leading an art class in the workshop at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, August 14, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.



The Gramsci Archive at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, August 6, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.



The Gramsci Bar at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, July 1, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.

Below: Cover of the *Gramsci Monument Newspaper*, July 7, 2013.



POETIC JUSTICE !!!

IN TODAY'S ISSUE READ POEMS FROM ARTIST OF OUR PAST AND YOUNG ARTIST FROM TODAY !!!!



A PHOTO OF PIER PAOLO PASOLINI!

me as I took the subway north from Manhattan to see the *Gramsci Monument* one oppressively hot, overcast afternoon in July.

"I LEARN[ED] that you can make anything out of art," proclaimed a handwritten note by Malika S., penned after a field trip to Dia:Beacon and reproduced in the July 7 issue of the *Gramsci Monument Newspaper*. Given her exposure to the work of Fred Sandback, Robert Smithson, and Dan Flavin, I suspect that Malika meant to say that you can make art out of anything, but nevertheless the point is well taken: The multivalent, porous, and ambiguous nature of Hirschhorn's project produced numerous points of entry and trajectories that did not lead to predetermined outcomes. To address a "non-exclusive" audience," Hirschhorn has written, "means to face reality, failure, unsuccessfulness, the cruelty of disinterest, and the incommensurability of a complex situation." Indeed, it was this openness and unpredictability, and even the risk of failure, that gave the *Gramsci Monument* its vitality. Anything could be made out of it. While that has become a cliché that many artists use to mask a lack of rigor in their thinking, in Hirschhorn's case, this mutability was directly linked to his conception of art's function in the world.

Besides all that brown plastic packing tape, what held the *Gramsci Monument* together were human encounters. And, to be sure, Hirschhorn gives good encounter. These interchanges were the catalyst that led to the invitation to work with the residents, and it was my interactions with them that made each trip to the Forest Houses worthwhile. "It is a platform for their yearning to share," one artist friend said of the *Monument*, and it was clear to me when talking

to Farmer; Saquan Scott, a coeditor of the newspaper; DJ Baby Dee, the project's MC; or Marcella Paradise, the aptly named project librarian, that the residents of the Forest Houses thought of the *Monument* as an opportunity to share their skills, lives, and experiences with others. Were such interactions, in fact, the art? Not clear. That said, probably the most interesting thing about Hirschhorn's project was its continual renegotiation and deconstruction of the ever-supple line between art and non-art. In the end, however, it was art that somehow always won out, and this at times left a bitter taste in my mouth.

"I have always seen my mission," Hirschhorn has written, "as taking over responsibility. Responsibility for everything touching my work, but also responsibility for what I am not responsible for." That's a tall order—a standard to which no one should be held—and yet it proves unexpectedly revealing, pointing to the inevitable chasm between the expectations such ambitious work engenders and the more modest reality of what it could deliver. To be sure, Hirschhorn did take responsibility for many things touching his work, as his full-time presence at the *Monument* attested. However, it was in small interactions where missed opportunities continually cropped up. Hirschhorn may have thought such exchanges fell outside the realm of what he was ultimately responsible for, but they showed where his priorities were at odds with what could have been—and needed to be—done.

For example, as much as I was touched by Malika's and her friends' conclusions about the nature of art in the *Gramsci Monument Newspaper*, when I finished reading them I thought to myself, "The word *metal* is spelled with a *t*, not a *d*." While it didn't surprise me that the children's handwritten testimonies

As multivalent and porous as the *Monument* was and as stimulating as my interactions with the residents were, ultimately a trip there was a trip inside Hirschhorn's mind.

were offered as authentic, unmediated documents of a “non-exclusive” audience's encounters with art, what did surprise me was that no one had helped them with their spelling and grammar. This might seem a trivial point to some, but in a neighborhood where fewer than 12 percent of the children at the public school I attended passed the state's 2013 English Language Arts test, this disregard spoke to a privileging of the encounter with art—the children's, Hirschhorn's, my own—over the more mundane problems of literacy and writing skills, just as it spoke to what the British writer Alan Bennett has called the “gap between our social position and our social obligations.”

Hirschhorn is very clear that the *Gramsci Monument* is art, not social work, and he resists the idea that he has an ongoing responsibility for what happens in the neighborhood after the *Monument's* departure. Even so, I could not help feeling time and again during my visits that there was something admirable yet unsettling about the intellectual rigor with which the *Monument* was constructed—a rigor that seemed to provide an answer for every critique and seemed to disconnect the work on some fundamental level from the community in which it was located. As multivalent and porous as the *Monument* was and as stimulating as my interactions with the residents were, ultimately a trip there was a trip inside Hirschhorn's mind. And fine mind though it may be, I felt a limit to the kinds of experiences one could have and struggled with moments when needs were ignored in favor of theories and positions. Just as my mother hoped that my teachers would take responsibility for me while I was in their care, I couldn't help but wish that Malika and her friends—while symbolically if not physically in Hirschhorn's care—would have had more of their needs engaged beyond the need to be exposed to art. They learned that “anything could be made of art,” but they didn't learn that the proper expression of that idea was as important as the idea itself. In the context of the *Monument*, where the boundaries of art were constantly being challenged, couldn't the simple act of an adult helping a child with her writing skills be considered art too?

What if instead of building the *Gramsci Monument*, Hirschhorn had proposed building the *Gramsci*

Charter School? This school could contain a radio broadcast station, a library, an exhibition space, an art workshop, a café, and an Internet room, as well as a stage for lectures and performances by a stellar list of visiting academics and poets. Its motto, “Every human being is an intellectual,” would be emblazoned on a banner stretched over the front door of a building purchased and maintained in perpetuity by Dia, just as the institution oversees long-term installations like Dan Flavin's in the Hamptons. Far-fetched, I know, but one of many possible projects that might have resulted in a deeper collaboration between Hirschhorn and the residents of the Forest Houses, one that would have implicated both the artist and the sponsoring institution in a vastly different dialogue around the nature of art. Perhaps this isn't the dialogue Hirschhorn wished to engage in, but it is one his project inevitably suggests.

And while I am imagining the far-fetched, what if the *Gramsci Monument* had landed in the Forest Houses in 1973 instead of 2013? What would I as a child have made of this manifestation of a distant, largely segregated but not unfamiliar art world, one I was just beginning to learn about from books and magazines (for example, reading about the work of Gordon Matta-Clark, whose *Bronx Floors*, 1972–73, was cut out of a tenement building just blocks from my house)? Would I have sat through long scholarly lectures and poetry readings or lingered in the library, flipping through books published in Italian and German as well as English? Would I have participated in the Gramsci Theater or attended the art workshops, grateful they were free and located around the corner instead of miles away? When all was said and done, that is, would the *Monument* have seemed a blessing to me or merely a supplement to what was already present in the neighborhood, where outside my bedroom window DJs were on the brink of inventing a musical genre that would circle the globe and daily I rode graffiti-covered subway cars that would provide a model for the use of text as art? The monument would have certainly been quite something in 1973, but in the context of a neighborhood filled with such rich cultural innovation, it might not have been *all that*.

In fact, had this fanciful scenario actually transpired in 1973, I wonder whether today, in the distant year 2013, I would remember my encounters at the *Gramsci Monument* with fondness or indifference. Would my encounter with the work have fundamentally changed the way I thought about art or would it have been one more stop on a path I was already on? Not sure. But I do know that art is based on “a yearning to share,” and that that impassioned desire is at the ever-shifting center of Thomas Hirschhorn's art. □

GLENN LIGON IS A NEW YORK-BASED ARTIST. (SEE CONTRIBUTORS.)



Above: Lex Brown leading an art class in the workshop at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, July 1, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.

Below: Lecture table at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.



DIEDRICH DIEDERICHSEN ON THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS HIRSCHHORN

Critical Laboratory: The Writings of Thomas Hirschhorn, edited by Lisa Lee and Hal Foster. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013. 417 pages.

STRONG ASSERTIONS are the most prominent feature of Thomas Hirschhorn's art. He always acts with great decisiveness. This raises many questions, some of which—one might hope—could be answered by the publication of his writings. It turns out, however, that he took the same approach to the texts collected here. Eschewing argument, Hirschhorn aggressively condemns all relativism, claiming that art does not need to be "put in context." Rationalizations, qualifications, and other civilian affectations are almost entirely absent from these texts. Instead, there are assertions, proclamations, manifestos, and other very masculine gestures of impatience, as well as, of course, *intensity*: Hirschhorn's most prized value.

If the lack of explanation in the book's first chapter, titled "Statements and Letters," can be chalked up to the artist's intimacy with his correspondents, the same style characterizes a later section titled "Projects." In reference to one of his first shows, at a squat in Paris called the Hôpital Éphémère, Hirschhorn writes: "This exhibition shows that everything is possible; that was its purpose. I said to myself: With my work I do what I want. I have no doubt that it's possible, *but is it really good?* I want my work to be good without any possible misunderstanding (I don't care if it is understood or not)." In his discussion of later works, the contradictions are no longer so obvious, but they are equally inescapable—as the necessary result of the discourse of intensity that comes from his self-positioning as tortured artist. At times he seems to notice that he is contradicting himself and adds a claim along the lines of "art can do anything," without offering any further comment on what this art that can do anything *is*, or whence it derives this wondrous power.

Not until the fourth chapter, which focuses on interviews, is the difficulty the reader faces in trying to understand Hirschhorn's rationale partly alleviated. For example, why are all four of Hirschhorn's Monuments, 1999–2013, devoted to big names in philosophy? He

seems to have chosen Spinoza, Deleuze, Bataille, and Gramsci simply because he finds them impressive; any further reasons are left implicit. Wouldn't the *Bataille Monument*, installed for the 2002 Documenta in a deprived part of Kassel, maybe have served its purpose better as a "Mother Teresa Monument," if the primary objective of its creation was indeed to achieve, as Hirschhorn claims, "friendship and social interaction"? The artist comments: "There was not a single book in the library by or about Georges Bataille, but [rather] books on the themes of Georges Bataille, because I wanted it to go beyond him. And ultimately I never talked to the youngsters I worked with about Georges Bataille. . . . It is possible that, in the end, Georges Bataille's name and his work could be replaced by others." So it is just as one always suspected: The names honored by the monuments are like rock-star posters in a teenager's bedroom—private documents of veneration, or assertions of cultural sophistication. It is on such fundamental points that the interviews are helpful.

At least to some degree, these conversations also expose the kernels of argument lurking in Hirschhorn's truculent rhetoric. In an exchange with Jacques Rancière, the artist describes his project as "the simultaneous

Below: Thomas Hirschhorn, *I Will Win*, 1995, video, black-and-white, sound, 4 minutes 30 seconds.

Right: Page from *Point d'ironie*, no. 23 (October 2001). Thomas Hirschhorn, *Spinoza Monument: A Document*.



affirmation of the autonomy and the universality of the work and the 'non-exclusive' audience for which the production of the work is intended." This sounds more interesting and plausible than the usual intellectually impoverished opposition between autonomous and social art: What Hirschhorn proposes is giving up neither, in fact even strengthening the concept of autonomy, but without sacrificing the social meaning of the work made under such conditions. But how aesthetic autonomy and a nonexclusive audience came to be opposed in the first place, and why this is a political and not a conceptual history, is not to be learned from Hirschhorn's statements. Moreover, one cannot produce such an audience simply by wishing it into existence, even if Hirschhorn believes that "nothing is impossible with art," as he confides to Benjamin H. D. Buchloh in a 2003 interview. And if one steers the existing art world into the everyday surroundings of those it excludes—as was the case in Kassel—the latter are inevitably objectified into exhibits that encourage the viewing habits instilled by reality television.

And yet, as a whole, the book does make Hirschhorn's position discernible. He wishes to campaign for art and artists with all the privilege accorded these categories,

while also inscribing his work in the traditions of form and content proper to critical art. But we cannot spare him from the most important relativization, the historical: In the 1980s in Europe, strong assertions, apodictic certainty, and art shamanism were the order of the day. These were the key characteristics of the punk resistance against the art of the '70s, which was seen as having become bogged down in relativism, too bureaucratic and complicit with the dominant politics of social democracy. During the course of the '80s, however, this mind-set lapsed into one of machismo and vacuousness, and was soon afterward called into question by the emergence of neo-Conceptual and feminist political art in Europe. Hirschhorn, however, combines the '80s machismo of intensity—and the associated romantic notion of the artist—with later struggles to engage with the public sphere and the everyday. To come to some kind of synthesis, it would be necessary to reflect the historical nature of this antagonism, instead of retreating to the magic of art, or even trying to reinvent it. □

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Translated from German by Elizabeth Tucker.



Above from top: Thomas Hirschhorn, *Deleuze Monument*, 2000, Cité Champfleury, Avignon, France. Thomas Hirschhorn, *Bataille Monument*, 2002, Friedrich-Wöhler housing complex, Kassel. From *Documenta 11*. Photo: Werner Maschmann.

Left: Page from Thomas Hirschhorn's *33 Ausstellungen im Öffentlichen Raum, 1989-1998* (33 Exhibitions in Public Space, 1989-1998), 1999, booklet, 8¼ x 11¾".

Building Complex

JULIAN ROSE

THIS PAST MAY, the New York City Department of Buildings issued work permit number 220288230-01-EW-OT to Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*. The project, located in the central courtyard of the Forest Houses, a New York City Housing Authority-administered complex in the South Bronx, was constructed over the following six weeks out of some forty-five hundred shipping pallets, two hundred sheets of plywood, ten thousand linear feet of lumber, and fifteen miles of PVC tape. A sprawling compound of enclosed pavilions atop a raised platform, the temporary structure was undeniably architectonic. Ask the artist to describe his piece, however, and he will tell you that it was "pure art."

For Hirschhorn, categorizing something as art means that it exists in a state of exception. "Art is something that reaches beyond habits." From this perspective, then, it's easy to see architecture as the polar opposite: In both its ubiquity and its role as the public face of institutional power, it is a manifestation of the status quo, of habit. And yet *Gramsci Monument* presents a paradox. While clearly out of the ordinary, disrupting the everyday realities of site and display, it is also Hirschhorn's most architectural work to date. To join the artist in denying this quality would be to miss the ways in which *Gramsci Monument* bucks the laws of public space and aesthetic experience alike, operating

simultaneously as architecture and art, exception and rule.

Gramsci Monument is the culmination of Hirschhorn's series of four homages to great thinkers. The evolution of these projects represents a remarkable effort to resurrect both public space and that which has historically defined it: the monument, whether hieratic statue or symbolic space. Hirschhorn's first such piece, *Spinoza Monument*, 1999, hewed to the form of the classical, monolithic memorial. It was cheekily located in the red-light district of Amsterdam and constructed from cardboard, garbage bags, and packing tape, but its primary element was a representational sculpture of Spinoza himself; Hirschhorn's interaction with the surrounding community was limited to borrowing electrical power from a nearby sex shop. The next year, Hirschhorn chose to locate *Deleuze Monument* in a public housing development in Avignon, France, and to build it in cooperation with local residents. A figurative sculpture—an enormous cardboard bust of the philosopher, again covered with tape and plastic—anchored this project, too, but Hirschhorn added a low rectangular shed to serve as a provisional library for Deleuze-related material. The structure was vandalized soon after its completion. As if in response, Hirschhorn decided that for *Bataille Monument*, 2002, made for Documenta 11 and sited in the Friedrich-Wöhler-

Siedlung, a housing complex in Kassel, he would not only build the project in collaboration with the community but would also remain present for its duration. There was still a major sculptural component, only now it was abstract—a looming, misshapen, organic form—and the accompanying spaces multiplied to include a library, a snack bar, and a workshop.

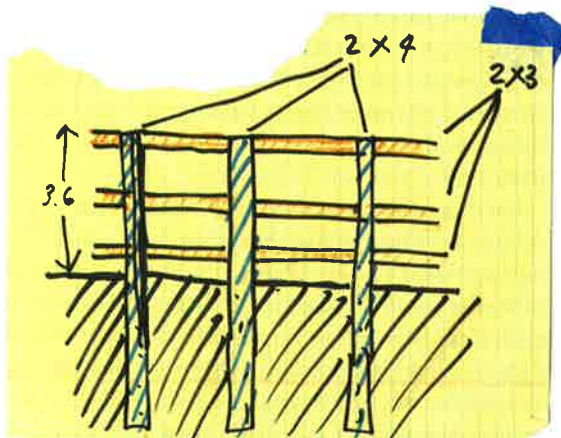
Hirschhorn felt in retrospect that *Bataille Monument's* abstract sculpture was a distraction for visitors, who mistook it for the entire monument, when the project's real focus was the complex pattern of use and interaction in the surrounding spaces. And so, as he says, when he began planning the *Gramsci Monument* almost a decade later, "I realized there was no more need for a sculpture." It was replaced by an increasingly architectural scale and complexity. *Gramsci Monument* was by far the largest of the four monuments, occupying a footprint of six thousand square feet, with the widest range of functional spaces: a newspaper office, a radio station, a computer lab, a café, an open-air theater, a workshop/art studio, a library, and a gallery.

By now, this narrative of the sculptural object ceding to some form of social space is a familiar one: It's the story, not least, of Conceptual art, relational aesthetics, and participatory art over the past five decades. And the monument is the ultimate representation of this contest between the categories of public

Below: Audience members at an event at the the Gramsci Theater at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, August 2, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.



Below: Construction drawing for Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013.



Below: Deinstallation of Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, September 16, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez.





Above: Thomas Hirschhorn, *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.

Above, right: Gramsci Library window at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.



It is precisely in opening up a radical alternative to architecture-as-usual that *Gramsci Monument* reaffirms the possibility of public space.

space and art, architecture and sculpture. It's no surprise, then, that the tradition of urban sociality and symbolic memory that the monument represents was largely rejected throughout the postwar period. Yet a viable alternative failed to appear. Instead, the interface between culture and public space became narrower and more homogenous, focused on forms of consumption and cultural tourism and serving an increasingly limited constituency, so that by the late 1990s architectural provocateur Rem Koolhaas could credibly claim that "public space is dead." Even emerging art practices that had tried to extend into public space—Rirkrit Tiravanija's convivial kitchen interiors, say, or Carsten Höller's backdoor chutes—were all too easily co-opted. In contrast, Hirschhorn's monuments have continually bypassed such preexisting institutional zones. They set off at a far remove, both geographically and demographically, from the now-habitual venues for public or participatory art. They forge their own physical infrastructure, relentlessly challenging and expanding our understanding of what constitutes public space itself.

But if Hirschhorn has been undeniably successful in his efforts to seek out what he calls a "non-exclusive" audience for his work, these encounters are not without tension. A visitor to the *Gramsci Monument* might have been tempted to understand it as a kind of grassroots collaboration between community and artist alone, but a review of the role of the Dia Art Foundation, which funded and helped organize the

project, quickly dispels such notions. The total budget was approximately half a million dollars, and Dia also assumed legal responsibility, taking out a substantial insurance policy to address concerns about liability expressed by the city's Housing Authority (the landowner of Forest Houses).

Although Hirschhorn surely deserves praise for mobilizing Dia's resources in such an original way, troubling questions remain about the role he expected local residents to play. His own rhetoric is less than reassuring. For example, while planning the piece, he wrote, "*Gramsci Monument* wants to be a universal artwork," and asserted that this universality would be "a way of fighting" reductive concepts such as "identity" and "culture." While the artist rightly dismisses simplistic identity politics, the notion of universality is equally problematic. One might have hoped for a slightly more nuanced view from an internationally famous European artist undertaking a project—one bound to raise questions not only about culture and identity but about race, hierarchy, and privilege as well—in one of America's poorest neighborhoods, where the population is predominantly African American and Latin American.

The residents of Forest Houses did, in fact, voluntarily choose to host *Gramsci Monument*. Hirschhorn was actually turned away by numerous other housing projects he approached, and his collaboration with the Forest Houses residents depended largely on an open-minded response from Erik Farmer, the president of the residents' association, and Diane

Herbert and Clyde Thompson of the Southeast Bronx Neighborhood Centers. But their decision may also, understandably, have had as much to do with recognition of the material benefits associated with the project as with enthusiasm for the monument itself. Hirschhorn (through Dia) paid the residents involved in constructing and operating the monument, creating almost fifty jobs, many of them full-time.

The economic disadvantages faced by Forest Houses residents, combined with Hirschhorn's universalist bent and the highly personal and idiosyncratic nature of the project—a monument dedicated to a philosopher of whom Hirschhorn is a self-professed “fan”—might suggest an artist (at best oblivious, at worst patronizing) imposing his own eccentric vision on the community, beginning with the appearance of the monument itself. *Gramsci Monument's* rough materiality and ad hoc construction clearly recalled the aesthetic of Hirschhorn's previous work, guided by an approach he likes to sum up as: “Energy=Yes! Quality=No!” But critics were quick to label *Gramsci Monument* a shantytown or an eyesore, questioning the ethics and appropriateness of its placement in an already underserved community—as if the ramshackle style implied that the residents did not deserve quality, and emblemized a vast disconnect between the author of this bizarre scheme and those subjected to it.

YET WHEN CONFRONTED with the scale and complexity of *Gramsci Monument*, Hirschhorn's signature approach became a kind of extraordinary experiment in communally built architecture. Evincing a canniness born of limited time and scarcity of specialized materials, tools, and training, the monument's collaborative construction was democratic in its very simplicity: It rejected expectations of what designed space is supposed to look like in favor of a radically pragmatic functionalism. To create the project's raised platform, Hirschhorn and his crew simply stacked shipping pallets into a superstructure that they then covered on the sides and top with a layer of plywood. The walls were assembled in sections of four feet by eight feet to match the dimensions of an off-the-shelf plywood sheet and to minimize cutting on-site. Windows were just holes haphazardly sawed in the plywood walls, overlaid with acrylic sheets affixed with staples, screws, and packing tape. Roofs were blue tarps thrown over rudimentary wooden frames.

Such a minimally scripted approach meant a continual process of exchange and improvisation. When the initial method of attaching plywood siding to the stacked pallets with screws proved too time-consuming, one resident-builder suggested that the plywood could be much more quickly attached with plastic zip



ties, thus inventing one of the project's more expedient and arresting construction details. In this sense, the monument existed not just as a functional space but as an index of interaction, embodying a kind of spirited collective innovation. And this extemporaneous rigging lent the structure a surreal, almost oneiric quality—perhaps most of all where the platform was penetrated by trees already existing on the building site—that reinforced its status as a place apart, unmoored from the rational spaces of the surrounding complex. One of the residents told Hirschhorn that every time she climbed onto the platform, she felt like she was on a ship.

The structure also evolved to meet specific needs. For example, as the theater was being built, everyone realized that it was too small; the stage would be on the elevated platform, with the audience seated on the ground below. This arrangement created an obvious spatial (and inevitably social) hierarchy, so the artist simply ordered more pallets and extended the stage, keeping the audience level with performers. Perhaps most important, though, was Hirschhorn's activation of these spaces. He programmed a frenetic array of events, some recurring daily (happy hours, children's art classes, radio shows, philosophy lectures) and others once a week (poetry readings, open mikes, lectures by Gramsci scholars, a community-curated visiting-artist series), all adding up to what Thompson approvingly described as “constant activity, capable of getting the whole community involved.” Indeed, this

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Above: Internet Corner windows at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.

Below: Interior of the Gramsci Library at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, 2013, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Photo: Chandra Glick.



prescription flashes. I noted: Is this the most conventional part of the tape?

Untitled may be Fraser's longest endurance performance. In it, her staging of being an artist is distinct from previous works in the specific ways we see Fraser manage inner and outer realms of self, everyday experience, career, and world, and the shifts within their orientations and ordering. And still, the project focuses contextual conditions within its structure and holds these within a delimited space for expression that can't last for very long.

Where the viewer is located in all of this is complicated. *Untitled* has the quality of a research project, though one that is largely carried out as a practice of embodiment and enactment (and so it exceeds conventional models of linguistic, institutional, and analytical practice). In thinking about *Untitled*, I have wanted most to avoid the binary of moral judgment (that Fraser is "selling out," being careless or self-destructive, that the work is objectifying or essentializing or complicit). On the other hand, I have wanted to refute any easy advocacy for the performance based on its empowered sexuality, provocation, and transgression alone. Neither position attests to the undefined sense of distance between artist and viewer or the aggressively raw power of the performance and resulting feelings of reaction that well up. This distance seems important for the identification that may or may not take place, and in order for a viewer (or writer) to take hold of the psychological blocks, projections, and deflections that structure the process of responding. As a performance *Untitled* opens a subjective question but then shifts its sense to become a feminist question: Is the sexuality within subjectivity a precondition of artistic work, of writing? And yet, before the writing of criticism, is there not also a technique and ethics of producing, of interacting within the structure of the object, from which to model a language of response? □

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NOTES

I would like to acknowledge Leigh Ledare for conversations and commentary that influenced this essay.

1. The first public exhibition of *Untitled* took place in September 2003 with the work's inclusion in a large, survey-type presentation of seventeen years of Fraser's practice at the Hamburger Kunstverein, curated by Yilmaz Dziewior. *Untitled* was first exhibited in the US in June 2014 at Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York—the gallery that had played a crucial role in Fraser's execution of the piece.

2. The work is a limited edition of five with two artist's proofs. The collector who acts in the video is therefore not the exclusive owner of the work.

3. *Barbara T. Smith: Old Shoes: Performance Relics 1968–1975* (Los Angeles: The Box, 2009). Published as a brochure in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name. *Feed Me* was originally a part of the exhibition "All Night Sculptures" at the Museum of Conceptual Art, San Francisco, 1973. The show included a recording of Smith's voice repeating, "Feed me, feed me."

4. *Untitled* does not obscure the conditions of monetary exchange as it makes cultural meaning. The piece's all-important economic transaction for the most part followed the structure of contemporary art sales. Friedrich Petzel Gallery brought the client at Fraser's request as someone the gallery considered well matched to the conditions of this particular project and purchase. The collector had acquired video work by Fraser from the gallery before. The income from the sale was divided between the gallery and the artist with the usual commission of 50 percent.

5. Conversation with the artist, October 2007. Asher and I talked about the

project, and about the conversation between him and Christopher Williams that took place within the project's opening events in September 2005 at the Art Institute of Chicago.

6. Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 235.

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attribute to deconstruction "the material representation of an abstract idea," it was arguably Johnson's formal language and a highly constructed formal similarity between projects that became equated with an identifiable style.

Today, deconstructivist roots are attributed to anything from Libeskind's Jewish Museum to the Seattle Public Library designed by Koolhaas with his office OMA. Because of the exhibition's timing and the technological connotations of the catalogue cover—a fax of a Coop Himmelb(l)au drawing—it is often described as ushering in the spectacular and specular forms of the computationally generated architecture of the 1990s and early 2000s. Though Johnson coyly regarded prognostication as a fool's game, Derrida—who, though nowhere mentioned in the museum's press material, was himself fully implicated in the show's polemics, having already collaborated with Eisenman on a project in 1985—prophesied that deconstruction would "yield an architecture which is no longer a closed, identifiable and specific field." In the end, this sentiment was echoed by others: Ingraham said deconstructivist architecture "will ultimately be the shift in the *idea* of architectural structure—its dematerialization—that will interfere most substantially with the material surfaces of architecture." Eisenman, participating in a Tate symposium on deconstruction in 1988, declined to show a work of architecture, claiming instead that the word described a way of thinking.

Indeed, as an apparatus, the exhibition eschewed the fixity that many would like to ascribe to it as a beginning or end. Could the exhibition be said to have opened the field to strategies of architecture as a largely dematerialized critical social, ecological, or geopolitical practice, as in the work of, say, Eyal Weizman, Philippe Rahm, or Teddy Cruz? Such later practices lend a hauntingly prophetic tone to claims in the exhibition's wall text that deconstructivist projects "radically displace traditional ideas about the nature of the architectural object," emphasizing such uncannily contemporary catchphrases as "strategic cultural interventions."

The exhibition opened a debate about what constitute the limits of architecture. Part of this debate was fueled by a recognition that social politics had become integral to the historical construction of architecture, and that media coverage had the power to institute a discursive shift. Part of it was simply based on an awareness that the work looked strikingly different from what had come before. Timing was integral to its effect. "Deconstructivist Architecture"—situated within the debates around the historical project of Constructivism and the theoretical position of deconstruction—opened a discursive field: that of the exhibition, with its myriad constituent elements, as a tactical strategy and critical project of architecture. □

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incessant activity seemed to ensure the engagement not only of the local residents but of the multiple publics who visited the monument throughout the summer, helping to lessen, even if it could never erase, the divisions between visitor and resident.

Gramsci Monument was at its most successful when these experiences exceeded the artist's control. One day, shortly before the beginning of the school year, a local charity helped to organize the donation of free school supplies to resident children, co-opting the monument unannounced. Asked why the event took place there rather than at the neighborhood community center, one of the organizers simply said: "This is where all the people are." A week later, a visitor from Occupy Wall Street showed up to talk to Hirschhorn about offering classes in civil disobedience. The artist declined, somewhat quixotically refusing to dictate an involvement in local politics. But that same afternoon, a local activist dropped by the radio station and publicized an event where residents could meet candidates for the upcoming mayoral election at a nearby church, encouraging them to turn the discussion to the New York Police Department's highly controversial stop-and-frisk tactics, which are rampant in the precinct encompassing the Forest Houses. Such casual and fluid intersections of the practical and critical were redoubled for residents and visitors alike through the constant background activity of the café, the newspaper offices, and the computer lab, not to mention through the steady stream of visitors and residents exploring the monument's less formal spaces, lingering on stairs or plastic-taped couches.

Far more important than the implementation of any one activity, then, was Hirschhorn's fundamental insight that public space cannot simply be engineered. After all, *Gramsci Monument* is located in what is essentially a failed public space: the courtyard of a city housing complex. Both the cruciform brown-brick towers of the Forest Houses and the large green spaces in which they sit are the legacy of a modernist attempt to find a single architectural solution to a complex social challenge, as if housing the urban poor were a problem that could be isolated and resolved simply by finding the right ratio of windows per apartment, units per floor, or tower footprint to surrounding park. But this architecture imploded both symbolically and functionally, to the point that "the projects" has become shorthand for an entire range of social and political problems. It is precisely in opening up a radical alternative to architecture-as-usual, while simultaneously emphasizing architecture's fundamental capacity to develop social interaction—triggering fluid and interwoven processes of construction, inhabitation, and interaction—that *Gramsci Monument* reaffirms the possibility of public space.

And yet this affirmation remains elusive. Officially, the work permit for *Gramsci Monument* belonged to the class "Alteration Type II," typically granted to repair or refinish jobs in existing spaces, which the Department of Buildings emphasizes must result in "no change in use, egress, or occupancy." Given the temporary nature of the project, this was the path of least resistance to getting all-important city approval for construction, and the fleeting, sly solution was perfectly in keeping with the transience and flexibility of

the work. At the same time, for anyone who witnessed the astonishing range of transformations in use and occupancy that *Gramsci Monument* brought to the Forest Houses courtyard over the course of the summer, the deadpan certainty of this bureaucratic language is bound to be deflating. As Hirschhorn's public projects become more spatially and socially complex—more architectural—they will also have to interface more directly with the powers that regulate the spaces they enter. After all, the closest real-life parallel to the spontaneous, community-built model of the *Gramsci Monument* might just be the shantytown that critics invoked. And even if the freewheeling favela may be bottom-up to the housing projects' top-down infrastructure, both are, of course, products of the same fundamental structural inequalities. In setting up a framework for unbridled escape, Hirschhorn risks only reinscribing an analogous structure of underlying control. Future works may need to present a challenge that cannot be so easily dismantled. □

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NOTES

1. Zhu Jianfei, "Opening the Concept of Critical Architecture: The Case of Modern China and the Issue of the State," in *Non West Modernist Past: On Architecture & Modernities*, ed. William S. W. Lim and Jiat-Hwee Chang (Singapore: World Scientific Publications, 2012), 105–16.
2. See Evan Chakroff, "Recasting History: The Ningbo Historic Museum," *Log* 24 (2012): 57–62; Thomas de Monchaux, "Toward a Dissident Architecture?," *n+1*, May 25, 2012, <http://www.nplusonemag.com/toward-a-dissident-architecture>.
3. Yang Yun, "You xifang xiandai jianzhu xin sichao yingqi de lianxiang," *Jianzhu xuebao* 1 (1980): 26–34.
4. Wu Yonghui, "Shi cong bijiao wenzue kan Zhongguo jianzhu," *Xin Jianzhu* 4 (1985): 41–43.
5. Peter Eisenman, "Editor's Introduction," in *The Architecture of the City*, by Aldo Rossi (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982), 8.
6. For Jencks, the contrast aptly expresses the tension between the static measurability of traditional tectonic construction and the dematerialized, voluminous expanse of the curtain wall. Jameson subsequently employed the metaphor only in an effort to discredit it altogether, proposing that the globalized scale of land speculation and the related, invisible vectors of international capitalism both render such traditional binary distinctions as form and nonform or plan and space invalid. See Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983–1998* (New York: Verso, 1998), 162–89. See also Charles Jencks, *The New Moderns: From Late to Neo-Modernism* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990), 85.
7. Philip Tinari, "What Does Not Stand Cannot Fall: Wang Wei's Temporary Space," in *Temporary Space*, exh. cat. (25000 Cultural Transmission Center, 2003), n.p.
8. James W. P. Campbell, *Brick: A World History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), 271.

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NOTES

1. *October* 70 (Fall 1994), reprinted as *The Duchamp Effect* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).
2. Okwui Enwezor, "The Postcolonial Constellation: Contemporary Art in a State of Permanent Transition," in *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity*, ed. Terry Smith, Okwui Enwezor, and Nancy Condee (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 211. A slightly different version was first published in *Research in African Literatures* 34, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 61.
3. See *Research in African Literatures* 34, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 79.
4. With the notorious exception of the ready-made's definition in André Breton and Paul Éluard's *Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme* (Paris: Galerie des Beaux-Arts, 1938), 23: "Objet usuel promu à la dignité d'objet d'art par le simple

choix de l'artiste" (Ordinary object promoted to the dignity of art object simply by the artist's choice). The entry is signed M.D. It is possible that Duchamp thought so in 1938, though I think it more plausible that he was feigning to placate Breton, whose entry on him called him "the most intelligent and (for many) the most embarrassing man of this first part of the 20th century" (ibid., 10). I find it in any case significant that Duchamp ironically concluded his entry on the ready-made with promotion to the dignity of art in reverse: "Ready made réciproque: se servir d'un Rembrandt comme planche à repasser" (Reciprocal ready-made: use a Rembrandt as an ironing board).

5. See my "Authorship Stripped Bare, Even," *Res* 19/20 (1990/91): 234–41.
6. I take issue with the notion of the "post-medium" condition, but this is not the place to do it. See Rosalind Krauss, "... And Then Turn Away? An Essay on James Coleman," *October* 81 (Summer 1997): 5–33; Krauss, "Reinventing the Medium," *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 2 (Winter 1999); Krauss "A Voyage on the North Sea": *Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999); Krauss, *Under Blue Cup* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011).
7. It won't be before we reach the last of this series of articles.
8. The story of Warhol and John Giorno meeting Duchamp that I told in article 1 is exemplary in this respect. See my "Pardon My French," *Artforum*, October 2013, 246–53.
9. Guillaume Apollinaire, *The Cubist Painters: Aesthetic Meditations* (New York: Wittenborn, 1962), 23. A note in the French edition specifies that "painted paper [i.e., wallpaper], newspapers" was an addition on the galleys, proof that Apollinaire had only recently heard of *papiers collés*.
10. William Carlos Williams, *Kora in Hell: Improvisations* (Boston: The Four Seas Company, 1920), 16.
11. "Oui, je me flatte de faire un film de n'importe quoi, et je trouve plaisant que s'en plaignent ceux qui ont laissé faire de toute leur vie n'importe quoi." Voice-over in Guy Debord's last film, *In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni* (1978).
12. Allan Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock" (1958), in Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. Jeff Kelley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 7–9.
13. Robert Smithson, letter to George Lester (1961), quoted in Thomas Crow, "Cosmic Exile: Prophetic Turns in the Life and Art of Robert Smithson," in *Robert Smithson*, ed. Eugenie Tsai and Cornelia Butler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 37.
14. See "Robert Smithson on Duchamp, An Interview with Moira Roth," in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*, ed. Nancy Holt (New York: New York University Press, 1979), 197–99.
15. Joseph Beuys (quoted in French), "Interview with Bernard Lamarche-Vadel," *Canal* 58/59 (Winter 1984/85): 7.
16. Beuys (quoted in French), "Interview with Irmeline Lebeer," *Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne* 4 (1980): 176.
17. Schwarz, who would later become Duchamp's biographer, has said that in addition to the artist's proofs, two "exhibition copies" were also made.
18. See William Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp: Fountain* (Houston: Houston Fine Art Press, 1989), 77–78.
19. Sidney Janis, in a letter to Camfield dated August 18, 1987, cited in ibid., 78.
20. Actually, this was a replica, too. Walter Arensberg, the owner of the original, had accidentally broken it. A letter to Henri-Pierre Roché, dated May 9, 1949, attests that Duchamp asked his friend to secure a similar vial from the pharmacy where he had bought the original. See Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp*, 76–77.
21. More remarkably, without having seen the original, Linde also made the copy of the *Large Glass* that was shown at the Galerie Buré and then traveled to Pasadena.
22. Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp*, 91.
23. Marcel Duchamp, in a letter to Katherine Dreier dated March 5, 1935, quoted in Ectek Bonk, *Marcel Duchamp: The Box in a Valise* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 147. I rely on Bonk's book for the description of the *Boite-en-valise* that follows.
24. With one difference, however: Contrary to Janis in 1950, Linde and Hopps did not hang the urinal in its usual, functional position, as Duchamp hung his miniature replica in the *Boite-en-valise*. They took their cue from the Stieglitz photograph as well as from the readability of the inscription.
25. See Robert Motherwell, ed., *The Dada Painters and Poets* (New York: Wittenborn, 1951), 306–15 and xvii (emphasis mine). Camfield insists that "that issue of *View* did not reach a wide audience," but that Motherwell's anthology "had incalculable influence on our thinking about Duchamp and a revived interest in Dada." Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp*, 76.

26. Of course, Beuys could not have known the facts posterior to January 23, 1986, the date of his death.

27. Besides Camfield's groundbreaking work, let me signal Francis Naumann, "The Big Show: The First Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists, Part I," *Artforum*, February 1979, 34–39, and "Part II: The Critical Response," *Artforum*, April 1979, 49–53; see also Edward Ball and Robert Knafo, "The R. Mutt Dossier," *Artforum*, October 1988, 116–19.

28. "There was not time enough to assemble the entire board of directors, but a group of about ten was gathered to decide the issue, and according to a *New York Herald* reporter, a battle raged up to the opening hour of the exhibition on April 9, at which time 'Mr. Mutt's defenders were voted down by a small margin.'" Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp*, 26. This, and the version told by Rockwell Kent in his autobiography (in my opinion the most probable one), in which he writes that after a heated discussion the board of directors finally found a way to refuse *Fountain* on the basis of a technicality (the entry card had not been filled in properly), are the least far-fetched of the many stories telling the fate of *Fountain*. See Rockwell Kent, *It's Me, O Lord* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1955), 316.

29. Announcement titled "The Society of Independent Artists, Inc.," undated, in the Archives of the Société Anonyme, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University; quoted in Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp*, 19.

30. In addition to Camfield's book, see my "Given the Richard Mutt Case," *Kant after Duchamp* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).

31. "The Society of Independent Artists, Inc."

32. Naumann, "The Big Show," 49.

33. Jack Burnham, "Problems of Criticism IX," *Artforum*, January 1971, reprinted in *Idea Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battcock (New York: Dutton, 1973), 69.

34. Quoted in C. S. Marlor, *The Society of Independent Artists* (Park Ridge, NJ: Noyes Press, 1984), 7. The same excerpt is also cited by H. P. Roché in the first issue of *The Blind Man* (p. 4), and taken up by at least one reviewer of the show (*Springfield Republican*, April 15, 1917).

35. Not that there are no facts, but they have been erased. Nothing has transpired from the meetings that led to the incorporation of the society (nor from the meeting where *Fountain*'s lot was decided), because a fire destroyed almost all the archives of the society in the '30s. See Camfield, *Marcel Duchamp*, 28.

36. *Ibid.*, 14.

37. Robert Henri, "The New York Exhibition of Independent Artists," *Craftsman* 17, no. 2 (May 1910): 160–61.

Caption acknowledgments

Pages 5 and 231: The Gramsci Bar at Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*, Forest Houses, Bronx, New York, July 1, 2013. Photo: Romain Lopez. © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. Page 66: Walter De Maria, *Boxes for Meaningless Work*, 1960–61. Photo: Bob Benson. © Walter De Maria 1961. Pages 77, 78, and 80: All works by Sarah Charlesworth: Estate of Sarah Charlesworth. Page 147: All works by Robert Smithson © Estate of Robert Smithson/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Pages 226–237: All works by Thomas Hirschhorn © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris. Page 228: New York City Housing Authority rendering, ca. 1960. Photo: New York City Housing Authority. Pages 238–247: All photos by Gianantonio Battistella: © CISA-A, Palladio. All photos by Stefan Buzas: © CISA-A, Palladio. Page 242: Carlo Scarpa, preliminary drawing, ca. 1970, for the Brion Tomb and Sanctuary, 1969–78. San Vito d'Alviolo, Italy. Photo: Archive Carlo Scarpa, Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona. Pages 264–273: All works by Marcel Duchamp © Succession Marcel Duchamp/ADAGP, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Pages 265–266: Views of "Marcel Duchamp: by or of Marcel Duchamp or Rose Sélavy," 1963, Pasadena Art Museum, Los Angeles. Photo: Frank J. Thomas Archives. Page 266: John Cage, *Reunion*, 1968. © Shigeo Kubota. Photo: John Cage Trust. Page 267: View of "Dada, 1916–1923," 1953, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York. © Geoffrey Clements. Page 269: Spread from *The Blind Man*, no. 2 (May 1917). Left: Alfred Stieglitz's photograph of Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, 1917. © Beatrice Wood. Page 270: Andy Warhol, *Screen Test: Marcel Duchamp*, 1966. © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Page 272: Marcel Duchamp, Jacques Villon, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, and Villon's dog Pipe in the garden of Villon's studio, Puteaux, France, ca. 1913. Photo: Smithsonian Archives of American Art. Page 272: View of the "International Exhibition of Modern Art," 1913, 69th Regiment Armory, New York. Photo: Smithsonian Archives of American Art. Page 273: Andy Warhol, *Brillo Soap Pads*, 1964. © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Page 273: Joseph Beuys, *Das Schweigen von Marcel Duchamp wird überbewertet* (The Silence of Marcel Duchamp Is Overrated), c. 1973. © Estate of Joseph Beuys/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.