

THE GRAMSCI MONUMENT



NEWSPAPER

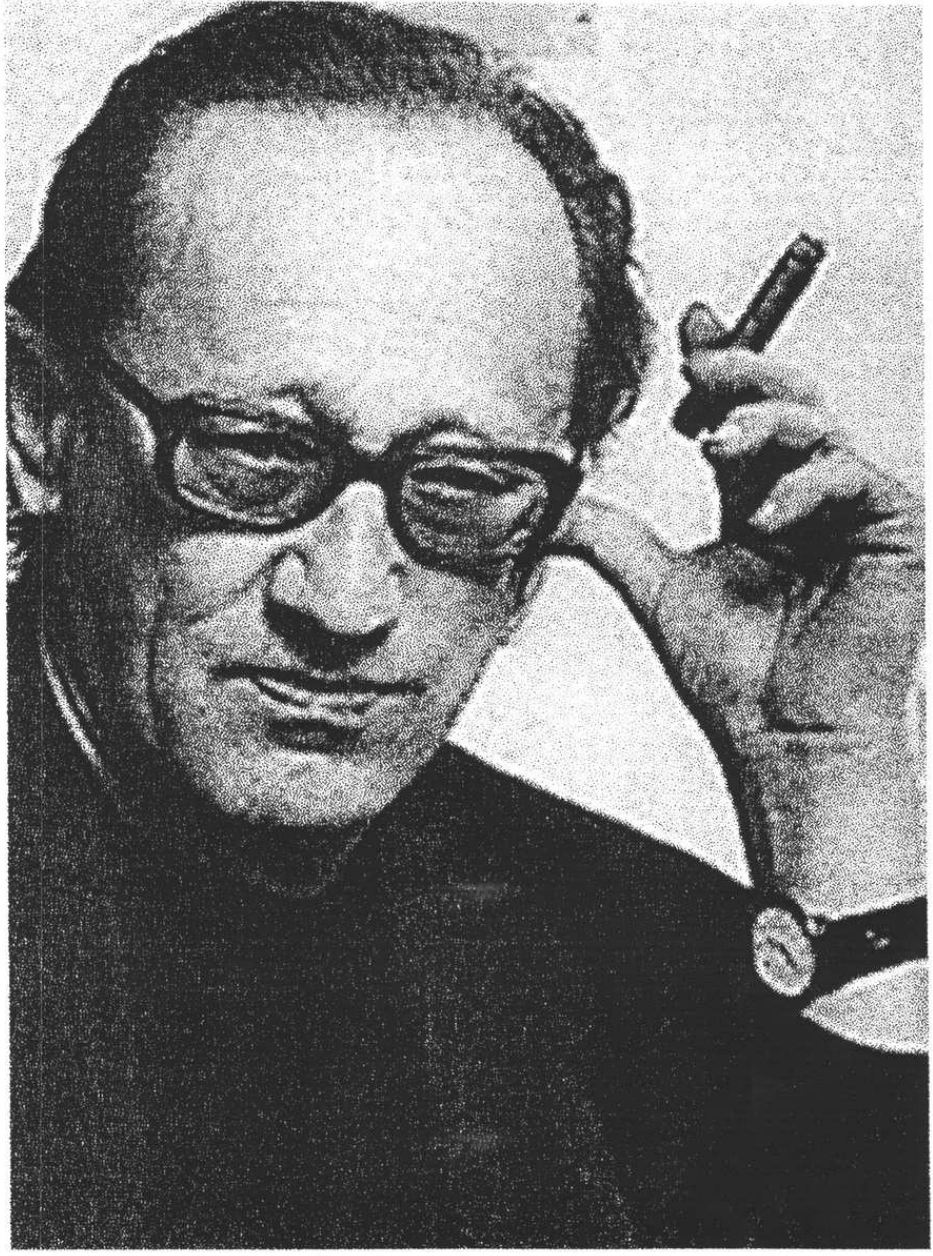
"A periodical, like a newspaper, a book, or any other medium of didactic expression that is aimed at a certain level of the reading or listening public, cannot satisfy everyone equally; not everyone will find it useful to the same degree. The important thing is that it serve as a stimulus for everyone; after all, no publication can replace the thinking mind."
Antonio Gramsci
(Prison Notebook 8)



www.gramsci-monument.com

August 6th, 2013 - Forest Houses, Bronx, NY

The Gramsci Monument-Newspaper is part of the "Gramsci Monument", an artwork by Thomas Hirschhorn, produced by Dia Art Foundation in co-operation with Erik Farmer and the Residents of Forest Houses



HEINER MÜLLER

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Bronx, NY 10456

Tuesday
Partly Cloudy



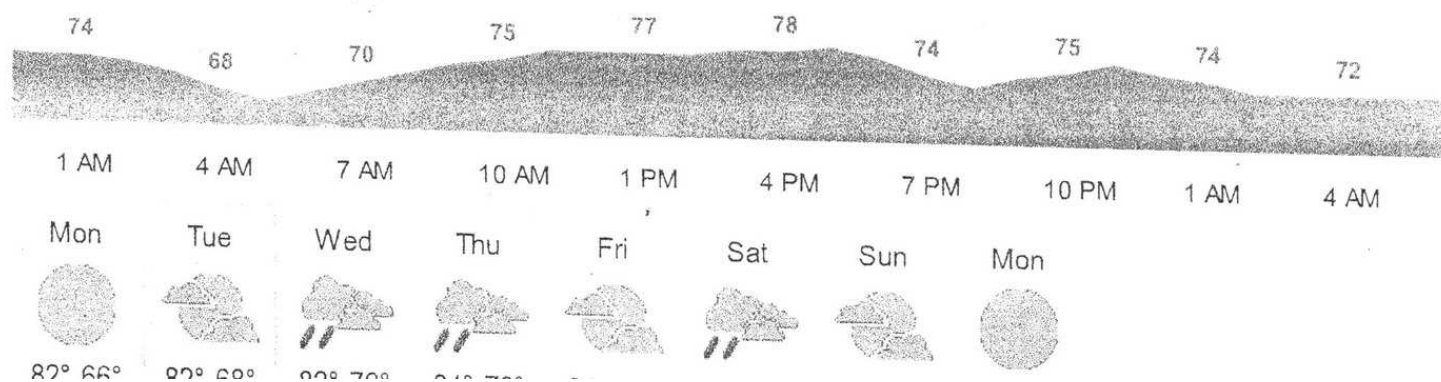
82 °F | °C

Precipitation: 30%

Humidity: 51%

Wind: 13 mph

Temperature	Precipitation	Wind
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CONVERSATION BETWEEN ALEXANDER KLUGE & HEINER MÜLLER

KLUGE

You wrote a poem here in the FAZ, "Welcome to Santa Monica." That must have been recently.

MÜLLER

Yes, that was in Santa Monica.

KLUGE

It says, "A dying man enters the hotel lobby/ where other dying people are killing time/ slowly or quickly, between birth and death": that applies to everyone. The walls are actually a waiting period, in a sense. You've had this way of looking at things for some time. It is an historical thought process. Can you remember having these thoughts as a child?

MÜLLER

I only know that one of my earliest childhood memories is as follows: I slept in an attic at my grandparents' house. It was quite small and up a flight of steep stairs. There was of course a chamber pot, because there was no toilet up there. And as I was sitting on the chamber pot, I realized for the first time that I eventually was going to die. On the chamber pot, exactly in the Freudian sense. That was my first thought about it.

KLUGE

So it wasn't a sentimental thought?

MÜLLER

No, it was simply a realization.

KLUGE

How did your mother die?

MÜLLER

It was kind of stupid that I didn't get to see her again. We were in Italy and heard that she was in the hospital, in intensive care attached to an iv. When we returned I \- this is of course a source of guilt for me - I took two days to reacclimatize myself and didn't visit her. And when I wanted to go there on the third day, she was already dead.

KLUGE

Was your daughter already born at that time?

MÜLLER

Yes. I am reminded of a sentence by Ernst Jünger that I always liked: "The blindness of will belongs to great politics." And the blindness of the will also belongs to a figure like Hercules.

KLUGE

And in that respect he is not just the man of power. Instead he is actually something that can be fed into Act 5 of Faust, as a close colleague of or as a substitute for this crazy Faust. And this doesn't have to mean that it either has to be Prometheus, with all his disadvantages, or that it has to be Stalin or Zeus or Zeus' son, and that fate always has to be eternally the same. The repetition of many new beginnings can sometimes create something very beautiful out of this Hercules. Because this man is conscientious.

MÜLLER

But the precondition for conscientiousness is the blindness of will.

KLUGE

The blindness of will. That is an ongoing theme of yours. You began in 1957 with a relatively aggressive, positive play.

MÜLLER

'56

KLUGE

'56. Ten Days that Shook the World ([Zehn Tage, die die Welt erschütterten]). It was about the 1917 revolution.

MÜLLER

That was the second play.

KLUGE

The second play. But at that time you were, so to speak, not without optimism at the level of the will.

MÜLLER

Yes, true.

KLUGE

Blind, but with willpower.

MÜLLER

That's right.

KLUGE

And now this must be understood in a larger context?



ALEXANDER KLUGE

MÜLLER

You know the expression from Gramsci that I always liked: "Optimism of the will. Pessimism of the intellect." That is actually the expression for such work.

KLUGE

And for how such an artist walks on a rope between two poles, and could otherwise not walk at all or practice his art. Is it in a sense a basic condition that one has to oscillate between the two poles?

MÜLLER

That's right.

KLUGE

And in that respect Hercules, as a type, has a somewhat less pessimistic side of the intellect: he hardly reflects at all. Theseus manipulates his intellect. He can think, but he only thinks in an instrumental way .

MÜLLER

You mean Perseus, right?

KLUGE

Yes, him too.

MÜLLER

Theseus . . .

KLUGE

Him too. Theseus makes sure that he errs at the right moment, sets the wrong sail and that his father dies at the moment when he returns home. He is in a sense always ready to err at the right time. Perseus, on the other hand, does something more direct. He reflects, he consciously but indirectly uses the intellect, he does not mistake his advantage. And he does not destroy his opponent by intellect, not even by cunning, but - if you will - rather brutally.

MÜLLER

By arrogance.

KLUGE

By arrogance and by showing the Gorgon's head that transfixes all opponents and by not telling the others about the operating instructions. He is simply a step ahead of the others and makes brutal use of his advantageous position, which he has genetically, in the line of development.

MÜLLER

Do you know the sculpture in Florence by Cellini? Perseus who . . .

KLUGE

Andromeda . . . who conquered a dream woman with cunning and malice and power. .

MÜLLER

... and kills her.

KLUGE

You once wrote a very short poem: you are sitting in an airplane, and you are served a glass of whisky. You have a distinct feeling that was once attributed to you in Der Spiegel and that now has suddenly become subsequently true. A sudden interruption of blindness, so to speak. Would you agree with that?

MÜLLER

Yes, I know what you mean.

KLUGE

At one point you talk about France, in one of your plays. Take a look at her, my France. And now this France is interpreted as a woman by your performers: emaciated breasts, a dead ship in the surf of the new century. A living ship in the 18th century, full of hope and setting sail into the revolution. And now in the new century, even Bonaparte is gone. Or he is there, which is even worse. You don't say it is stranded. But it keeps on going like a flying Dutchman. To what would you compare your country, whatever that is? Would you compare it to a woman, like France here?

MÜLLER

That is a question that I am not prepared for at all. But of course I would compare it to a woman, yes. I would by no means compare it to a father or a man. It is definitely a woman.

KLUGE

You could also compare it to an object or a machine or a book or a building. . .

MÜLLER

No, it is definitely a woman.

KLUGE

And how does this woman look? Like on the five mark bills of the Third Reich during the currency reform, a worker?

MÜLLER

I think it is simply a pretty woman.

KLUGE

A waitress? Kitchen, cashier?

MÜLLER

It could be a waitress, yes.

KLUGE

But she is of the working population, not a princess or Joan of Arc or something like that. Not an armed woman like France? In France she

wears a cap, a Phrygian cap and usually has either a sword or a flag in her hand.

MÜLLER

No, a waitress is fine. Sometimes when I am enjoying my privileges Such as whisky in the airplane from Frankfurt to (West)Berlin I am overtaken by what the idiots from Der Spiegel call A furious love of my country Wild like the embrace of a queen of hearts - Believed to be dead - on judgment day.

KLUGE

When you are working here, in your study, here next door, there is a lectern on one side, then there is the typewriter, the relatively bare window, and you move in between them. Do you work in the morning or at night?

MÜLLER

Preferably in the morning. And sometimes at night now, because there is no alternative. But mornings are better. You know the difference between day and night writers. You can see it in the work of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. Tolstoy worked during the day, Dostoyevsky at night. These are the two basic types, I think.

KLUGE

As a type, you fit the model of Dostoyevsky better?

MÜLLER

I don't know. In principle ...

KLUGE

Shorter, definitely shorter.

MÜLLER

... I prefer to write in the morning rather than at night. But that has changed...

KLUGE

... that was your goal: constructive, realistic texts, but instead you do. . .

MÜLLER

the opposite. That's true.

KLUGE

You sabotage realism?

MÜLLER

Yes, and myself as well.

KLUGE

So there are two souls. The first soul, the constructive one, is in the plays you wrote while you were still working on the work-front here. What was that called - in production? That is a time that means something to you.

MÜLLER

Although the problem was always that I never wrote what I wanted to write, or what I thought I was writing. That became especially clear to me when I was staging The Scab ([Der Lohndrucker]) in the Deutsches Theater. That was in '87, I think. So I was staging the piece about 30, 31 years after I wrote it, and it was suddenly a completely different play. I remembered having an intention when writing the piece, and the intention didn't have anything to do with the text or the text with the intention. It was a diagnosis - a very pessimistic diagnosis \- that I discovered during this staging. But it was conceived as . . .

KLUGE

as constructive, optimistic

MÜLLER

a constructive, optimistic contribution to the building of something. But I ended up describing the symptoms of an illness. Müller, at his writing-lectern, reads a text that he wrote while in intensive care. Simultaneously images from the army of Heinrich VI, father of the Stauferkaiser Friedrich II, going to Sicily: "The wild animals in Sicily under the command of Heinrich VI get along as in paradise/ Here you see the partridges, lions, deer, panthers, drinking from the same spring." Dream Forest. A New Text by Heiner Müller Tonight I walked through a forest in a dream It was full of horror According to the alphabet With empty eyes no gaze understands The animals stood between tree and tree Carved into stone by frost Out of the row Of spruces towards me through the snow Came clanging am I dreaming do I see what I see A child in a suit of armor and visor In arm the lance Its tip blinks In spruce-darkness that drinks the sun The last trace of day a golden line Behind the dream forest that beckons death And in the blink of an eye between thrust and stab My face looked at me: I was the child.

KLUGE

It is reminiscent of Parsifal.

MÜLLER

Yes, and you know, I didn't know that when I wrote it. I really wrote it in the hospital.

KLUGE

You don't write something like that very often. Everything rhymes twice. It is quite a strict poem.

MÜLLER

It is a sonnet. In the hospital I discovered \- I think we spoke about this before - that only strict forms help with pain. Unrhymed poems are not enough. Text: Parsifal, divided into six pieces / Japanese version (Bunraku) Kluge: If you would stage Parsifal according to the rules of Bunraku, let's say the second act, not Klingsor . . . The Kundry story would definitely have to be separated from the Parsifal.

Let's take the Kundry story and disregard the rest of the opera. The castle owners are located in another fragment, and in the next piece there is the story of how the swan is killed. The third, a tableau, describes all of the knights, the final battle in a castle. Wouldn't that be followed by the inner world of the imperial chancellery, in terms of only emotional events? One wouldn't stage the psychological plot, the external plot of the imperial chancellery, but rather the voices, the inner voices of the last three days. That would actually be a powerful, interesting opera.

MÜLLER

The basic problem is this submissiveness to so-called realism; a totally wrong understanding of reality underlies even this concept of realism. And one can only see reality when one divides it into pieces, into segments. If each observer could see the possibility of recombining these segments into their own reality, perhaps in combination with their own dream reality, then that would be the ideal theater. But I don't know whether we will live to see that. That was also a dream of Brecht's, and he never achieved it. But the terrible thing in theater is that you are faced with an apparatus that has an immense pull, an immense power.

KLUGE

and that forces a realistically depicted evening performance. It takes part in every aspect of the discussion. But this here will be different, according to your experience in the opera. Because opera is not a realistic depiction anyway.

MÜLLER

No, there is a chance in opera to try it.

KLUGE

The only restriction is that the music can't stop.

MÜLLER

You will of course be killed if you are the first one to try it.

KLUGE

But you could also fragment the music by separating out the individual people, right? Each person would then be a drama in themselves.

MÜLLER

Yes, but then you would need - pardon me - a communist society because there is the matter of copyright.

KLUGE

But you are allowed to do it with dead composers.

MÜLLER

With totally dead composers you can do it, but Wagner is not totally dead because there is still the Wagner Company.

KLUGE

But they can't keep you from doing it.

MÜLLER

No, they can't keep me from doing it. But convention forbids it.

KLUGE

But if you took out all of Wagner's weather music and said that you were making a weather film beginning with the Valkuries, then it would be allowed.

MÜLLER

Müller reads his text with the title "Opera" (three lines). Text: Onassis, inventor of the ships of the dead Callas, the most beautiful voice of the century, Shared his bed A Good Formula for Patriotism An older alcoholic - a misanthrope or something - was sitting in a bar in Pankow. I think it was at the end of the 80's or the beginning of the 80's. He made his living by always listening to people, who then bought him a drink. As he was sitting at a table, an older bureaucrat who was from some sort of government ministry came by. He desperately wanted to talk about having been in Paris. This was a major sense of achievement, visa to Paris, and business trip and so on. And he told him about Paris, about Montparnasse and Montmartre and everything else. And at some point in the excitement about Montmartre or Montparnasse he knocked over the beer on the table and spilled it. And then the alcoholic said: Fuck Paris! His beer had been spilled during the travel report. I think that this is a good formula for patriotism.

A DAILY LECTURE BY MARCUS STEINWEG

37th Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 6th August 2013
ON HEINER MÜLLER
Marcus Steinweg

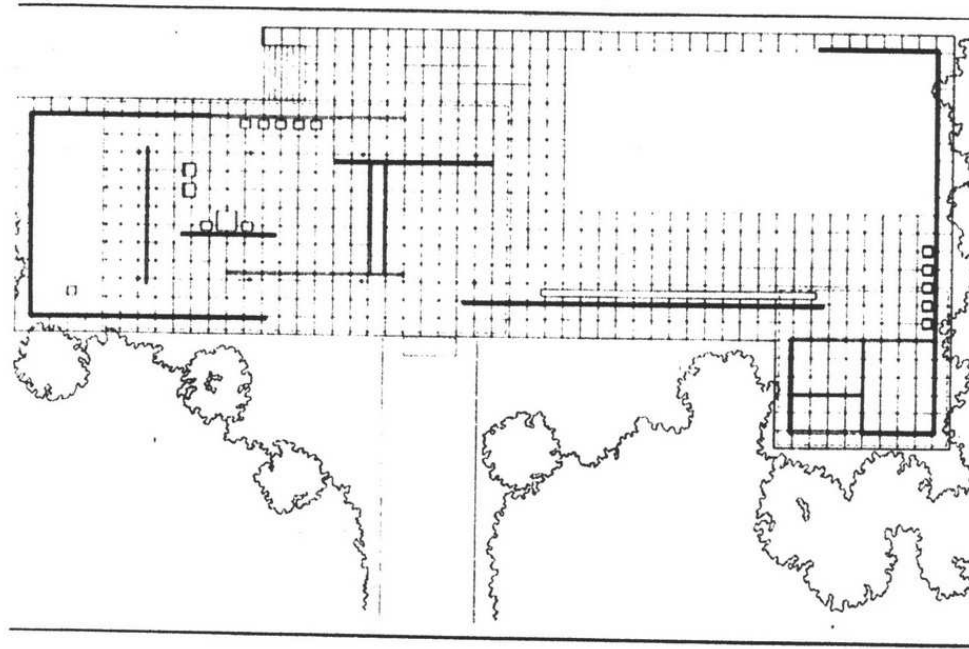
Heiner Müller is a German writer. He was born in 1925 and died in 1995.

The importance of his work can be summarized in 5 points:

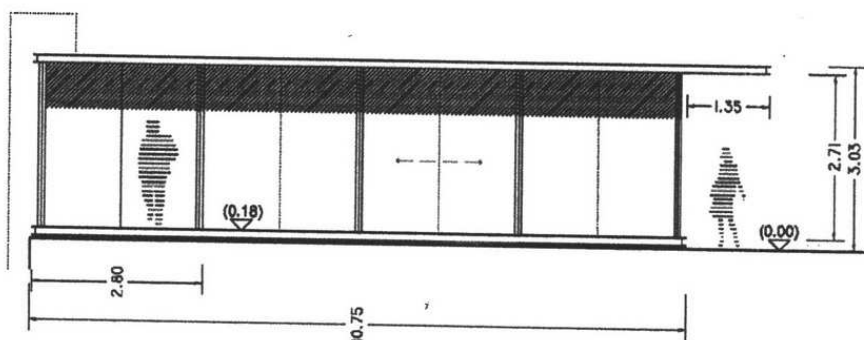
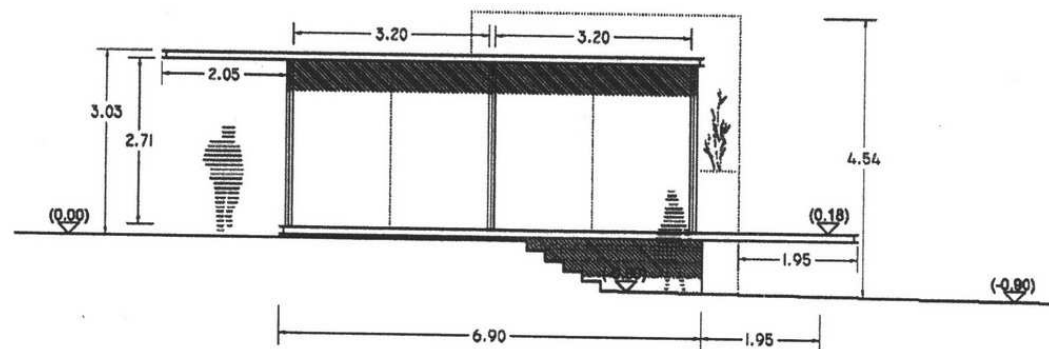
1. In its insistence on the impossible.
2. In the affirmation of a certain non-integrity of the human being.
3. In establishing a kind of cold view on reality. To finally confront it like it is instead of moralizing how it should be.
4. In its affirmation of chaos as artistic strategy.
5. In its interrogation of a reduced concept of enlightenment.

AMBASSADOR'S NOTE # 23

BY YASMIL RAYMOND



(continues from note 22) Consider the *Barcelona Pavilion* (1929) conceived by Mies van der Rohe (German, b. 1886 - d. 1969) for the 1929 Barcelona International Exposition, an enigmatic building, a cross between a foyer and an exhibition hallway. With its system of common areas and open spaces, the pavilion comes into being "all at once" with no specific function, outside classic conceptions of space by interrogating the basic conception of shelter by advancing an investigation of subjective discoveries that can emerge through socialization. It is in this affirmation of subjectivity that the form of the pavilion can points to social relations often neglected by architecture and moreover by institutions. (continues on note 24)

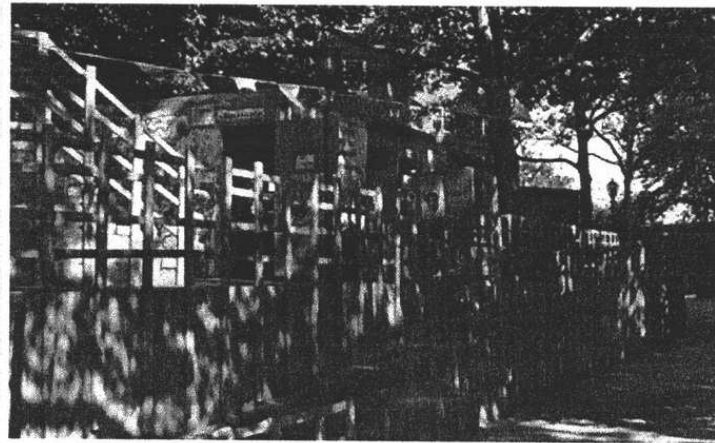


WHAT'S GOING ON?

FEED BACK

Saturday, August 3, 2013

ART, REVOLUTION AND POVERTY ENCLAVES: A MONUMENT TO GRAMSCI IN NEW YORK

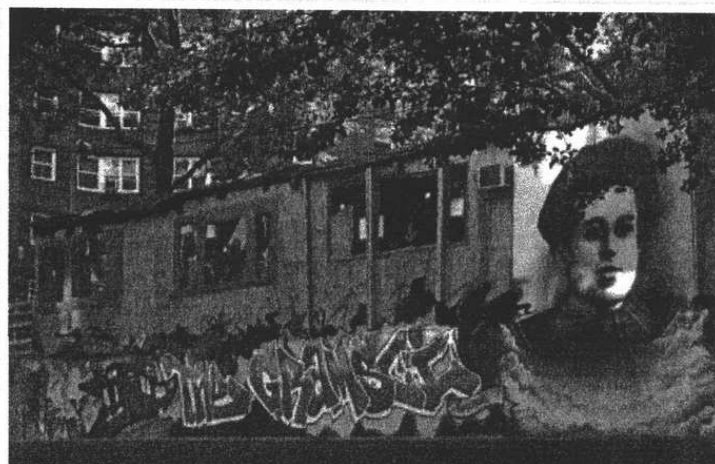


Gramsci: The Character

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was an Italian Marxist philosopher whose immense bibliographic production combined with political activism. He was president of the Italian Communist Party, trade union leader and deputy in the Italian parliament in 1924. In 1926 the government of Mussolini seized an alleged attempt on the Duce to make the ruling bloc pass legislation that would allow the opposition to attack. One of the first prosecuted under these laws was Gramsci. It was necessary to prevent the functioning of your brain for 20 years, said the prosecutor's trial. Gramsci was first sentenced to five years in prison after 20 years. He lost his health in prison. Very sick, lived the last three years of his life on probation.

I confess that I can hardly read philosophical treatises with much difficulty, especially those of German and Marxists. The almost ethereal abstraction level and detailed disquisitions on the meaning of words and word combinations are inclined to close the doors to my understanding. Therefore, perhaps, I have dedicated my life to the practical aspects of the social sciences and humanities. I understand, however, the power of ideas and admire those that change the course of thought and end up influencing the way we build social sciences and humanities. Antonio Gramsci is that kind of thinker.

So when I read in The New Yorker magazine that the artist Thomas Hirschhorn had created an installation in honor of Gramsci in one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York City I was captivated by the idea that someone would bring a revolutionary thought very critical to those most in need.



The Bronx: Poverty Enclave

The South Bronx for years evoked human disaster that capitalist economic cycles generated in vulnerable sectors of society. The poverty of the people, the destruction of the urban environment, the breakdown of family networks, the loss of solidarity between neighbors, crime, collective despair, the absence of the state as administrator of the common good, the uprooting of the traditional population were documentábamos things that social scientists in the eighties of the last century.

There was a time when presidential candidates were a must in the Bronx to emphasize their promises to end poverty in the country (promise you no longer feel compelled to do open right candidates, in contrast to those of right clandestine). *Fort Apache: The Bronx*, testifies film of that time as director Daniel Petrie and Paul Newman as lead artist created in 1981.

Gradually things changed with the prosperity brought by the waves of immigrant workers from the nineties, which rebuilt and repopulated the city, making it, without intending, economically viable for immigrants from middle and upper class that have been coming in little so far this century.

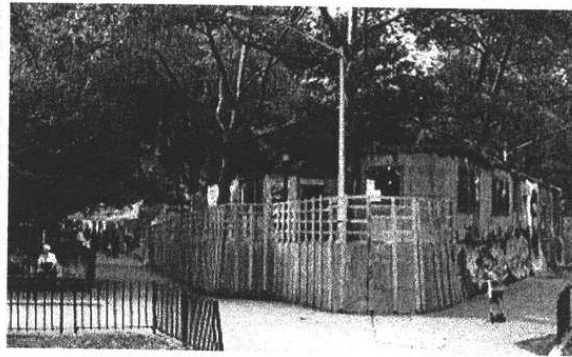
The area's population postal censual where the facility in honor of Gramsci has an estimated average income of U.S. \$ 22,549 for 2010, is a neighborhood multi-ethnic and multi-lingual where 56% of the residents are Hispanic. 's 44 % live below the official poverty level, 32% are immigrants arrived from the Dominican Republic,



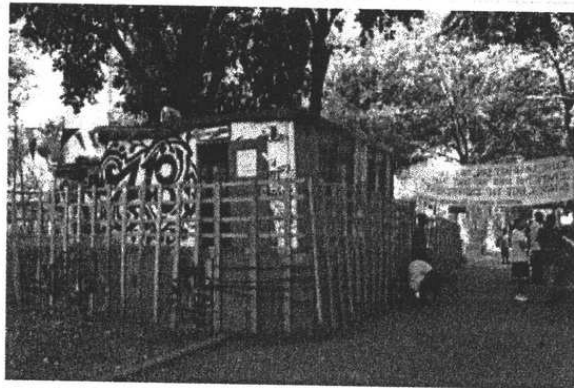
Honduras, Ecuador, Jamaica, other Caribbean or Africa. English is the predominant language in the home because it is spoken by 63% of the population, however, 40% spoke Spanish and 57% spoke some other language. The 17% completed high school, 6% earned a degree, 11% have a master's or a doctorate (which is normal in New York City where one can find highly qualified professionals in the poorest neighborhoods), but the 17% did not complete high school. These statistics give an idea of the audience they want to reach the artist and their sponsors.

The Facilities

The installation or Gramsci Monument as it is officially called, is built in the green area of a set of buildings subsidized housing for low-income people administered by the city.

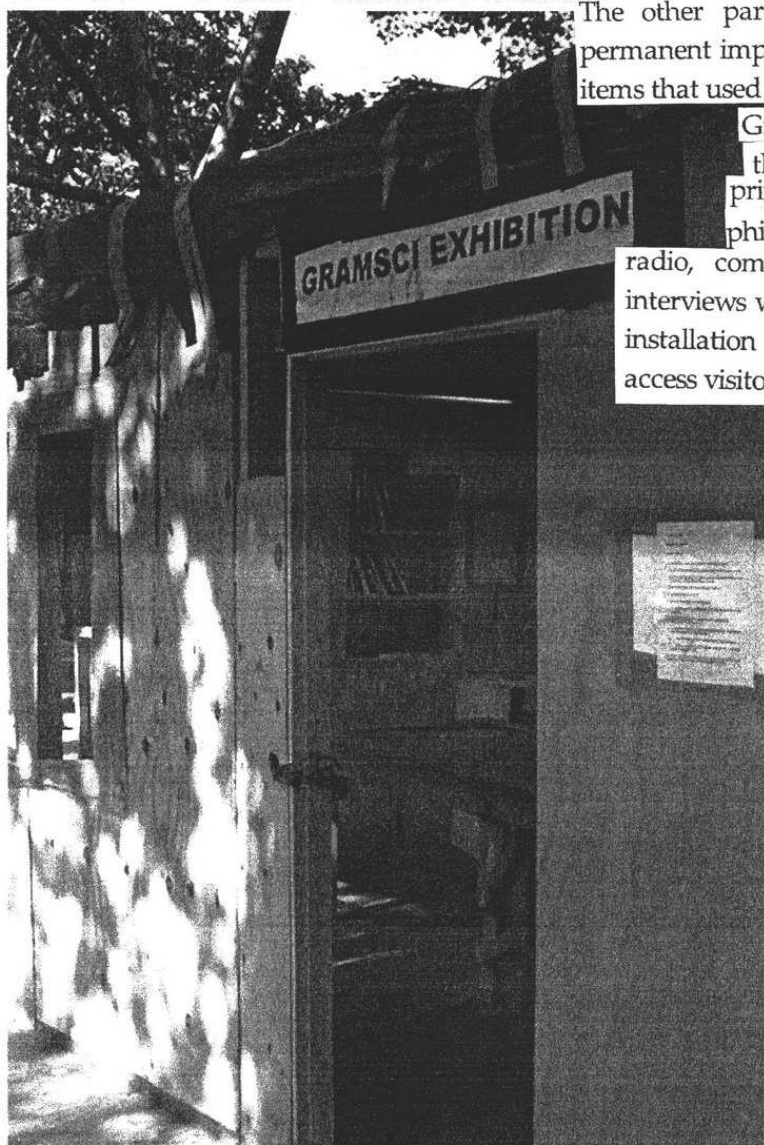


I visited for the first time on Thursday, July 25 in the company of my friend Alonso Córdoba Granada, biologist, researcher aquatic life and talented photographer. With your help I can try for the first time an illustrated chronicle in this blog.



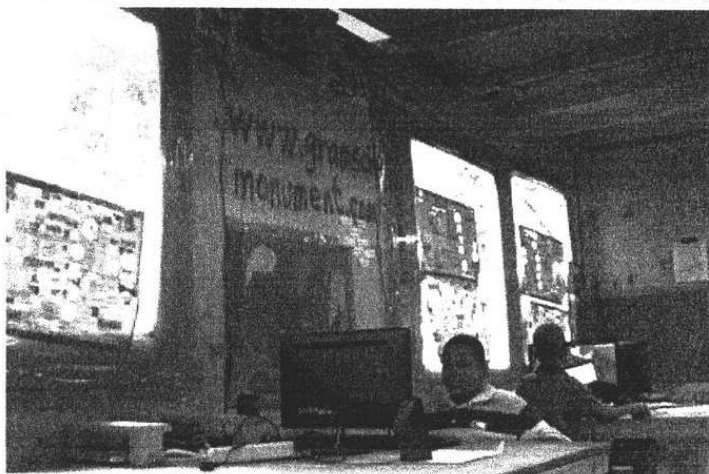
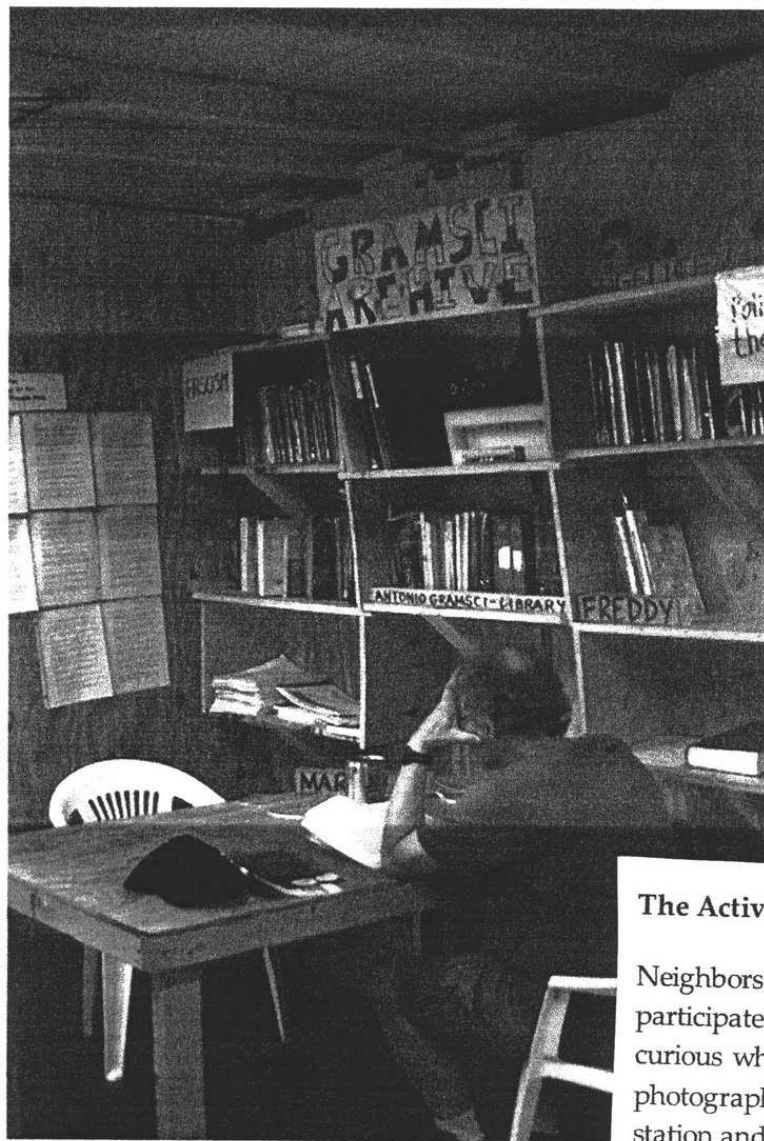
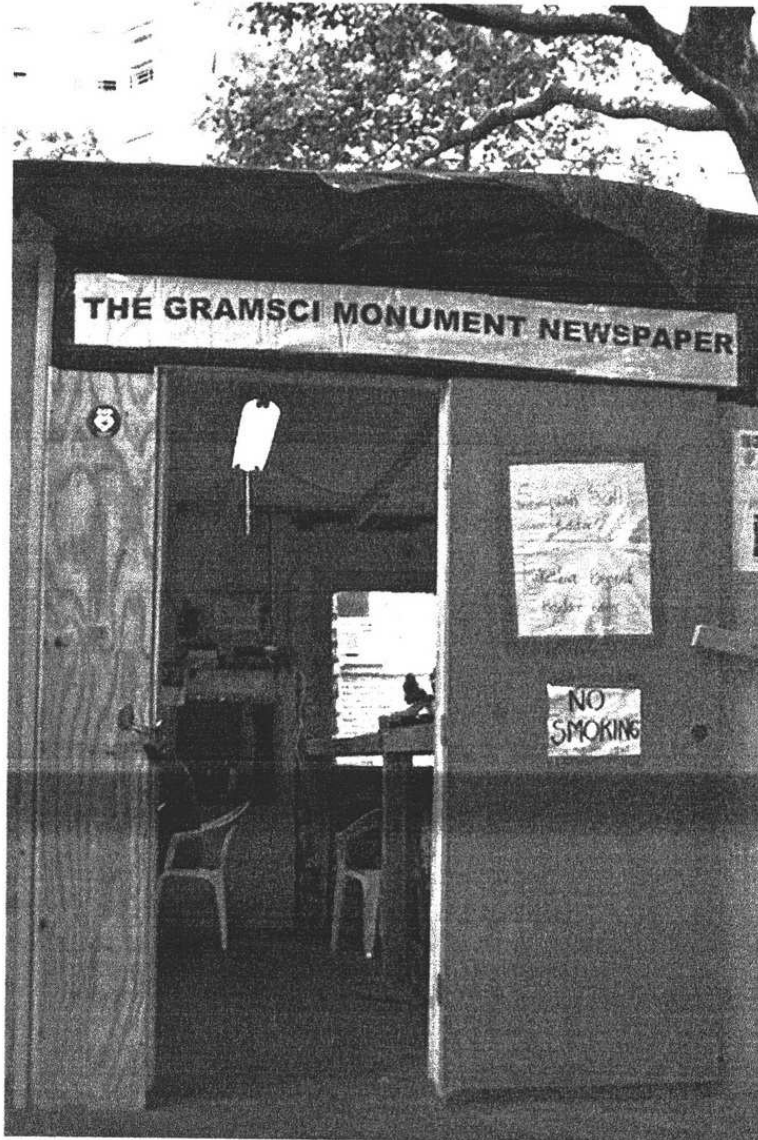
The memorial resembles a community house made of perishable materials, designed to last about month and a half (July 1 to August 15), divided into two parts connected by a bridge over a pedestrian. One part is intended to community activities and includes an art studio, a cafeteria and an auditorium where concerts,

lectures and an open mic for use by spontaneous willing to share their talents with visitors on Sundays. I would say this is the dynamic, daily changing of the



The other part of the monument is dedicated to routine activities, constant, permanent impermanence within the project. There is a gallery exhibiting personal items that used Gramsci when he was in prison, a library with the complete works of Gramsci in English and Italian, and many books on Gramsci's philosophy, theory of revolution, history, economics, politics and art, a workshop for printing a newspaper which publishes news about the project and philosophical comments,

radio, community radio station that broadcasts music, cultural lectures and interviews with visitors who want to talk about the impression which has caused the installation and computer lounge with free internet. To all this have unrestricted access visitors.



The Activities

Neighbors have appropriated this space on their own terms. Community volunteers participated in the construction of facilities and are available daily to guide the curious who arrived from other parts of the city. A child took the presence of the photographer to make a show of *break dancing*. A local leader manages the radio station and another serves as master of ceremonies in the auditorium.

Each day of the week there is a different event. Neighbors make dance theater Mondays and Tuesdays, Wednesdays there is a poetry session, on Thursday a

guided trip to the neighbors to some place of interest in the city, on Friday a workshop Art presented by the artist Hirschhorn, a seminar on Saturday and Sunday Gramsci open mic. Every day, rain or shine, at five in the afternoon, a lecture by a German philosopher on an agenda designed to cover the history of philosophical thought.



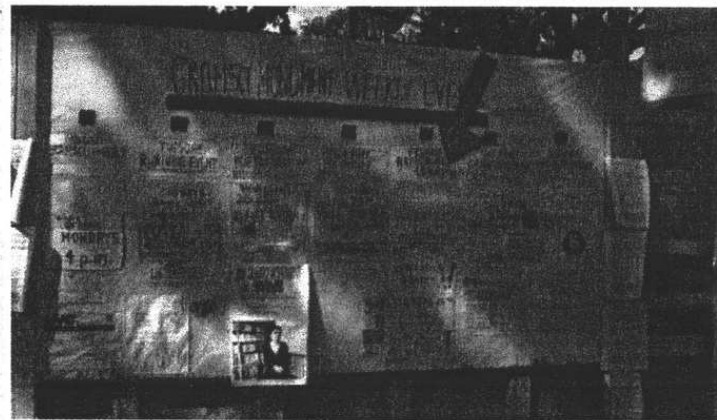
I have heard two of the 77 scheduled conferences "decision or choice and freedom and imprisonment" and "the notion of Slavo Zizek Love", which, I must confess, I understood little.



But something interesting happened on both occasions. Community women asked questions about any of the points made by the speaker. Although not at the level of depth and erudition displayed by this, the questions indicated that people were attentive to the talk and tried to follow the theme.

Gramsci's Message

The idea of bringing revolutionary inspiration to a community that needs it fascinates me. In this system one finds banners with slogans taken from the texts of Gramsci. For example: "I live and take sides. Why I hate those who are not with anyone, I hate the indifferent", "Quality is something that should be attributed to the human being, not things", "Destruction is difficult, so difficult as building", "The purpose of the modernity is to live without illusions without becoming disillusioned.



Glass urns containing the comb, wooden spoons, linings and shoes he used wallet Gramsci in prison should arouse sympathy in a neighborhood familiar with the repressive arm of the state and the punitive side of the law. The revolutionary texts should be echoed in schools, bars and neighborhood streets. The newspaper, radio station and philosophical discussions should generate a lively discussion of local

The question I ask is whether this was the intention of the artist and their sponsors. And if it was, is this an effective way to do so, appropriate to the culture and needs of the local people?

My Reflection In the Monument

I'm very curious to know the reaction of the public to topics like "Heidegger to Deleuze", "hyperbolic statements", "Deconstruction of criticism", "Subject of precipitation" and "transcendental self-acceleration". I fear that assails these things are vehicles for social awareness project, political ideology and cultural preconceptions elites sensitive to the problems of the poor masses have about what they should do to improve your place on earth .

The ideas of social progress, justice and personal freedom need to be translated to the medium and time of the group for which they are directed, in a process of education for the masses which extend their conceptual universe. This educational process is what is manipulative at in agitation and propaganda work groups and leaders doing revolutionaries Danton, Marat, the Bolsheviks during and after the civil war in 1917 - and level of education and transformation of class consciousness in schools and universities organized labor in many parts of the world since the nineteenth century.

In the meantime this installation draws attention to both the neighbors and the middle-class intelligentsia in the city. And here we go, to discover their artistic aspects, reflect on the ideas around the name of Gramsci and express solidarity with vague and general human condition of people living far from the centers of power and wealth of Wall Street.



RESIDENT OF THE DAY



MR. SANTOS PEREZ