

THE GRAMSCI MONUMENT- NEWSPAPER

Editors:
LAKESHA BRYANT
and
SAQUAN SCOTT

www.gramsci-monument.com

"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)

N°69

September 7th, 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



MARCUS STEINWEG:
THE MAN WITH THE
POWERFUL WORDS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. COVER PAGE (MARCUS STEINWEG)
2. TABLE OF CONTENTS/WEATHER
- 3-7. SPECIAL GUEST: ALFREDO JAAR / INTERVIEW WITH YULIA TIHONOVA
8. A DAILY LECTURE BY MARCUS STEINWEG
9. "THE MAP OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN ART AND PHILOSOPHY" BY THOMAS HIRSCHHORN & MARCUS STEINWEG
- 10-11. BOOKS BY PHILOSOPHER MARCUS STEINWEG
- 12-13. RUNNING EVENT: GREG TATE, MARC CARY, MEAH PACE & KIM HILL
- 14-15. FEEDBACK
16. RESIDENT OF THE DAY

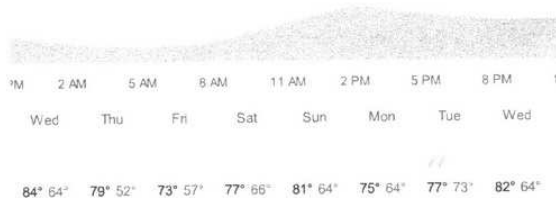
Bronx, NY 10456

Saturday
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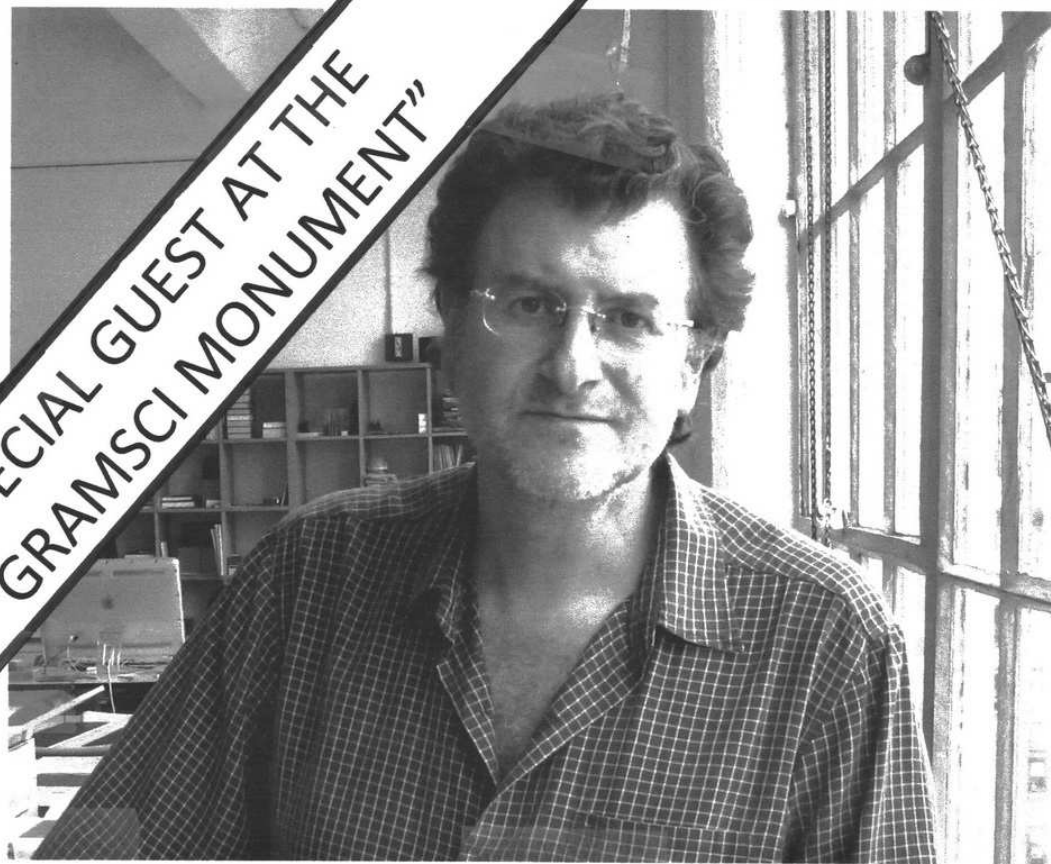
77°F | °C

Precipitation: 0%
Humidity: 50%
Wind: 10 mph

Temperature Precipitation Wind



SPECIAL GUEST AT THE
"GRAMSCI MONUMENT"



Alfredo Jaar

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Alfredo Jaar (born 1956) is a Chilean-born artist, architect, and filmmaker who lives in New York. He was born in 1956 in Santiago de Chile. From age 5 to 16, he lived in Martinique before moving back to Chile.^[1] He is mostly known as an installation artist, often incorporating photography and covering socio-political issues and war - the best known perhaps being the 6-year long *The Rwanda Project* about the 1994 Rwandan genocide. He has also made numerous public intervention works, like *The Skoghall Konsthall* one-day paper museum in Sweden, an early electronic billboard intervention *A Logo For America*, and *The Cloud*, a performance project on both sides of the Mexico-USA border. He has been featured on Art21.^[2]

Born	1956 (age 56–57) Santiago de Chile, Chile
Nationality	American, Chilean
Field	Conceptual art, Installation art

Void Manufacturing

"Turning and turning in a cell, like a fly that doesn't know where to die."

Alfredo Jaar Interview: In step with Gramsci →

Posted by voidmanufacturing on December 14, 2008

"For the last five years I have been rereading Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* and reviewing films of Pasolini. In my view, they are the most outstanding thinkers and intellectuals of the twentieth century. Both believed in the capacity of art to affect society and to change the course of history. I think that these ideas are more important than ever, and this is what has prompted me to pay homage through my work to these two illuminating intellectuals."





In step with Gramsci: an interview with Alfredo Jaar

Yulia Tihonova The mode of being of the new intellectual can no longer consist in eloquence ... but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organizer, "permanent persuader" and not just a simple orator ...

Antonio Gramsci, Letters from Prison (1)

These words of Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist and humanist, may aptly describe the artistic position of Alfredo Jaar, the Chilean-born, New York City-based artist who has chosen the commutative strategy of being an active intellectual for more than twenty-five years. By virtue of his expressive medium, Jaar creates evocative artworks that not only inform viewers about the tragic

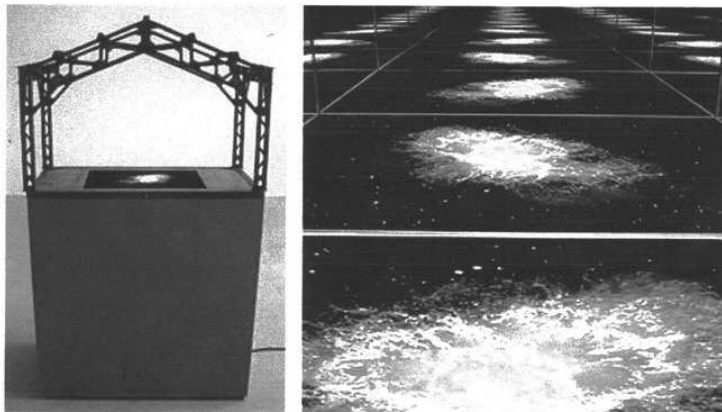
events all over the world but also attain a personal meaning for the artist and viewers alike. The artist impels and organizes public perception in such a way that viewers are inspired to take action and confront issues.

With the geography of tragedy dictating the itinerary of his travels, Jaar is driven by his dynamic social position to find the places where the intervention of humanity is urgently required such as Angola, Nigeria, North Korea, Rwanda, and Vietnam. Visiting combat zones, the artist portrays what often has been marked as "unrepresentable"—trauma, pain, and grief. Without further didactics, his message is clear and empowering, interrogating and demanding a resolute position in response to the world of injustice and torment. (2)

Although Jaar intends to remain invisible and eliminate his subjective view from the visual scene, the artist is nevertheless present through his choice of interpretive strategies that speak not only to just a western audience but reach beyond the boundaries of narrow localization.

Using installation, video, and photography, Jaar manipulates light and mirrors as media to bring about transient qualities of light and time. These two, in turn, articulate the spatial architectonics and, when combined with other parts of the artwork, form installations where one is simultaneously an interpreter of an artwork and the means of its affect, whereby every detail affects various stimuli of human perception. In so doing, Jaar forces the viewer to decode the emblematic signs and compose meaningful connections between the actual and implied, visual and imagined. While providing almost minimal information, the artist orchestrates the medium through a musicality consistent with his metaphoric references. Whether it is an image of an exploding galaxy, which denotes the dissemination of Gramsci's ideas, or flickering TV screens that hint at Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's media empire, the medium reinforces collective and subjective interpretation.

Jaar is equally able to respond to the anguish of the Other. The haunting language of a metaphor is essential for the artist on a personal level and even more so for someone who has witnessed countless incidents of poverty and death. These experiences never grow into a habitual acceptance of the scenes of catastrophe, whether natural or ersatz.



This interview focuses on the series of projects titled "The Gramsci Trilogy" (2004-5), which Jaar produced under the auspices of several Italian cultural institutions, including Foundation Antonio Ratti in Como, Galleria Lia Rumma in Milan, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome (MACRO), and Studio Stefania Miscetti in Rome. By reinstating the once celebrated Gramsci—the extraordinary philosopher and organic intellectual, founder of the concepts of the cultural hegemony and the quiet revolution, and the source of inspiration for the theoreticians of the Frankfurt School—Jaar sought to reinstate the specter of intellect. In step with Gramsci, Jaar exemplifies a figure of the "permanent persuader" that the Italian Marxist had long searched for.

The artist draws attention to Gramsci's concepts of social equality and decentralization of power in the wake of a corrupt and consumer-ridden Italian society. By drawing on historical connections between Gramsci and Italian poet and filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini, the artist also pays tribute to the indomitable spirit of the latter. "The Gramsci Trilogy" presents five distinct works combining text and image: a prologue titled "Searching for Gramsci" (2004); the trilogy itself that includes "Infinite Cell" (2004), "Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom" (2004), and "The Ashes of Gramsci" (2004); and an epilogue titled "The Aesthetics of Resistance" (2005). These sequences narrate a persuasive account of the steps of Gramsci from the past into the present.

YULIA TIHONOVA: What are the sources, stylistic affinities, and concepts that inspired "The Gramsci Trilogy" project? Did your "epistemological privilege of being a foreigner," that is, having a unique perspective on the country, give you an advantage while working in Italy? (3)

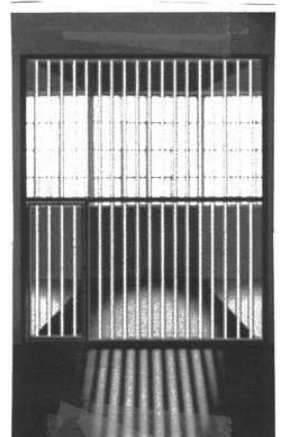
ALFREDO JAAR: For the last five years I have been rereading Gramsci's Prison Notebooks and reviewing films of Pasolini. In my view, they are the most outstanding thinkers and intellectuals of the twentieth century. Both believed in the capacity of art to affect society and to change the course of history. I think that these ideas are more important than ever, and this is what has prompted me to pay homage through my work to these two illuminating intellectuals. As soon as I received the invitation to work in Italy, I decided that I would focus on them and their work. While conceiving "The Gramsci Trilogy," I was also evaluating how I was going to address the legacy of these key figures of our social history, who have been shamefully neglected by contemporary Italian society. I wanted to draw attention to Gramsci's incisive concepts of the intellect—that is, an instrument for the organization of human life. I was mostly interested in Pasolini's ideological precision, not very common in a poet. Hence, I draw upon Pasolini's 1957 poem "The Ashes of Gramsci," which occupies a special place in Italian poetry. I feel that my distance from the Italian context was essential in creating this meaningful project that addresses the larger issues of power, consciousness, and history. In this body of work, I stay outside the frame, so to speak, but remind the viewer about the timely spirit of Gramsci and Pasolini by impact of the medium that I use.

YT: You conceived "The Gramsci Trilogy" as an ongoing search for Gramsci's ideas that are alive today. MACRO curator Dobrila Denegri characterizes this investigation not only as an artistic record of the places you went to but also a metaphor for conscious living, where you act as a trenchant observer of the political environment of present-day Italy. Could you walk us through your project?

AJ: In the prologue, "Searching for Gramsci," my early morning journey starts at the Rome cemetery where Gramsci is buried. My camera follows the graveyard pathways, the nearby trees and sunlight—everything is quiet. His grave is enlivened by the fresh roses recently placed on it. Obviously, people remember him. Here I am thinking of Gramsci, whose legacy will never die. My next stop is at the home of Antonio Negri, a philosopher, a disciple of Gramsci, and a prisoner himself for thirteen years. In this portrait, I wanted to capture the penetrative expression of his face. After visiting Negri, I continue my walk around the city looking for signs of Gramsci's presence, trying to make connections between Fascist Italy of the 1930s and contemporary society. Looking at the bridges across the Tiber River, the symbolism of divisions between rich and poor, powerful and marginalized, and progressive and conservative comes to mind. The concept of bridging these opposites provided for Gramsci's revolutionary thinking. I ask myself, where is Gramsci today? In my walk around Rome on that special day, I am searching for him—he who was one of the greatest thinkers of the twentieth century, someone who believed in the capacity of culture to affect social life. Here I am taking a nostalgic trip, almost a lament, wondering if there is someone writing the Prison Notebooks for the twenty-first century. These are some of the questions I reflect upon in each of the thirty-six images of the prologue.

YT: You continue your poignant journey in the steps of Gramsci into the first chapter, "Infinite Cell." How do you develop confined architectonic space that carries out your conceptual undertaking?

AJ: Most of my works are site-specific and orientated toward the viewer who is always required to actively participate in the perception of the space and the work. Here, prior to the "Infinite Cell," one encounters a silkscreen print of the intense red surface imprinted with the numbers ... twenty years, four months, and five days. This is Benito Mussolini's dreadful prison sentence for Gramsci. I think that the malicious cruelty of this verdict transcends its time and can be read as a symbol of the present Italian administration: Berlusconi's government is drowning in a black cloud. The past and the present are inextricably linked, as is the connection of Gramsci with the politics of today. To amplify the evocative qualities of this work, I sought the most intense gradation of the red pigment, which was finally achieved by layering twenty-nine coats of the color. This surface never dries and



YT: Gramsci's intellectual strength is admirable, especially while participating in the so-called "prison university," which was created by prisoners. During his time there he never lost touch with the guiding principal of his "philosophy of praxis," that one labors to understand the world as precisely as possible in order to change it. How did you translate this understanding into visual effects in the context of a contemporary gallery?

AJ: The viewer enters a reconstructed prison cell, which is made up of continuous mirrors along two opposite walls. A real window with metal bars offers the only light inside the cell. The emotions of claustrophobia and fear overpower the spectator when encountered with a myriad of self-reflections. The intimidating continuity of this space is another metaphor for Gramsci's nearly half-life sentence. Purposefully, I reduced the entrance to the cell as if to imitate the scale of this space, to show how it would have felt to Gramsci—a person of small stature. The architectonics of the space was utilized to a maximum effect and gives an impression of infinite captivity. When I think of the vision and values of contemporary society that are about consumption and wealth, I do not see light or future among these people, and this somber infinity of the installation reflects precisely that.

YT: In *Re-Visions: An Introduction to Geography = War*, Ashley Kistler insightfully defines your use of mirrors as a critique of "our narcissistic, self-obsessed society." (5) Mirrors offer the perfect ironic instrument for introducing the image of the "Other" into a realm of "self." How does this device work for you in the "Infinite Cell"?

AJ: My history of working with mirrors started thirty years ago when I was trained as an architect. I have always considered the mirror as a kind of invisible threshold between real and reflected spaces. It announces a distance that is at once perceptual, emotional, and physical and separates oneself from the "self" reflected. In this case "self" becomes externalized. This allows for new relations to occur between a subject and his or her double that prompt evaluation of these confrontations, viewed in the larger context of contemporary society. In our world of catastrophes, which is oversaturated by images of pain, blood, and anguish, we become numb to the pain of others. We simply deny such events being immersed in our own individualistic space where we feel safe and distant from troubled reality. That is why I thought that the space of the mirror was the ultimate space to create an encounter with someone we have never met. The mirror facilitates what I call "an infernal triangle": we watch ourselves watching other people watching us watching them watching me.



YT: Indeed, Gramsci defined the model of an intellectual or artist as being an active participant in practical life, as a constructor, organizer, and "permanent persuader." Your next chapter reflects upon the destiny of those who have chosen an active social position and paid for their illuminating spirits with their lives. "Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom" ponders the notorious words of Mao Zedong who, in the mid 1950s, called upon Chinese intellectuals to join his revolution. What is the connection between Mao, Gramsci, and Italian politics?

AJ: Mao sought out intellectuals to participate in his cultural project and renew the revolution. To instigate and lure them, he proposed the following motto, based on a very old Chinese poem: "Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom, Let One Hundred Schools of Thought Contend." After a year, he was finally successful, which resulted in a swell of intellectual vitality but simultaneously there arose severe criticism of Mao's leadership and the course of revolution. His malicious answer to the critique and proposed innovations was mass prosecution of cultural intelligence. I am "translating" this dreadful historical occurrence into a visual representation by the following approach. On the gallery floor, a large metal base holds a total of one hundred live flowers. Simultaneously, the flowers are subjected to contradictory forces. On one hand, they are fed with daylight and water. On the other hand, and, simultaneously, they are being subjected to extremely cold temperatures and strong winds. On the wall, the image of Gramsci's grave is projected, as if the ghost of Gramsci is witnessing this painful scene. The poetic metaphor here is quite clear: one can kill people, but one cannot kill ideas. This installation also reflects on the demagoguery and false promises of Italian politicians.

Someone like Berlusconi, who has almost absolute control over the country's media, makes any independent publications and critical voices almost impossible. It also references the artistic production that has been kept, semi-alive, by governmental liberties. Although the artist is able to criticize the government, this critique is controlled by the very same power that let it happen. Democracy works, doesn't it?



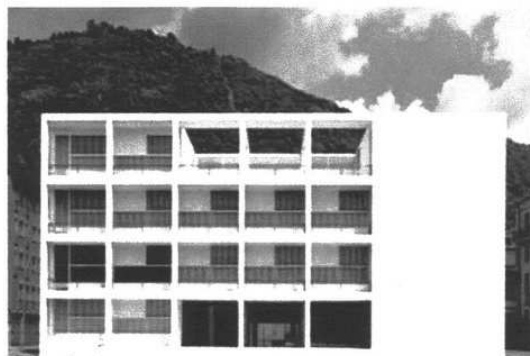
YT: Your next act of the trilogy is "Ashes of Gramsci," where you borrow the title from Pasolini's 1954 poem of the same name. How do you visualize this connection?

AJ: While conceiving this chapter, my thoughts were focused around modernity and the utopia of a better world, which truly encapsulates the ideas of Gramsci. By using the image of an exploding star, I envisioned a metaphorical dissemination of Gramsci's concepts around the world. The brilliant fractures of the star image, originally taken at an observatory in Chile, explode into multiple mirror reflections. In this way, I use mirrors again, this time to testify to Gramsci's teachings. In addition, this piece is my way to bring Pasolini into the picture, as an intellectual for whom I have the greatest regard. When Pasolini wrote his epic poem as an homage and celebration, he also lamented the absence of Gramsci and the unlivable present.

YT: The evocative title of the last act of the trilogy, "The Aesthetics of Resistance," was appropriated from Gramsci's book and also served as a trenchant theme of the Advanced Course in Visual Arts under the aegis of the Foundation Antonio Ratti, located in Como, where you were a visiting professor at that time. How did the site of Como affect your concept of this project?

AJ: I was thrilled to find in Como an extraordinarily beautiful modernist building by Giuseppe Terragni built in 1936 for Mussolini. I thought that this structure, the Casa del Fascio (Peoples' Palace), would be, ironically, a perfect memorial to Gramsci. Therefore, I projected a sequence of images on the right facade of the building, an area that was left uninterrupted by Terragni especially for the display of fascist propaganda such as huge banners or flags. The projection starts with lines that follow the pattern of the windows of the building and create a grid. Within the grid appear eight TV screens with their color bars. These were obviously read in connection to Berlusconi's media empire. In a few minutes the images on the TV screens diminish to be replaced by the sequence of my visit to Gramsci's grave from the prologue. Here, the fascist building is transformed into Gramsci's grave. My trip is thus complete, the circle closed, and Gramsci's indomitable faith in humanism and the hegemony of intellect is still alive. People were, I think, touched and empowered

by my concept of transformation of the former headquarters of Fascism in Como into a commemoration and celebration of Gramsci. It was hopefully a true manifestation of everlasting resistance to tyranny and death. (6)



NOTES (1.) Antonio Gramsci, *Letters from Prison*, Volume 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 68. Volume II is titled *Prison Notebooks*. (2.) Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Lament of the Images: Alfredo Jaar and the Ethics of Representation," *Aperture* 181 (Winter 2005). (3.) Ashley Kistler, *Re-Visions: An Introduction to Geography = War*, exhibition catalog (Richmond, VA: Virginia Museum of Fine Art, 1991), 13. (4.) Dobrila Denegri, "Theater of Doubt," in Alfredo Jaar, exhibition catalog (Rome: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005), 98. (5.) Kistler, 6. (6.) This interview was conducted at Jaar's studio in August 2006. Many thanks to the artist for his generous time and attention, and to the artists Jeff and Alina Blumis for initiating this interview.

A DAILY LECTURE WRITTEN BY MARCUS STEINWEG

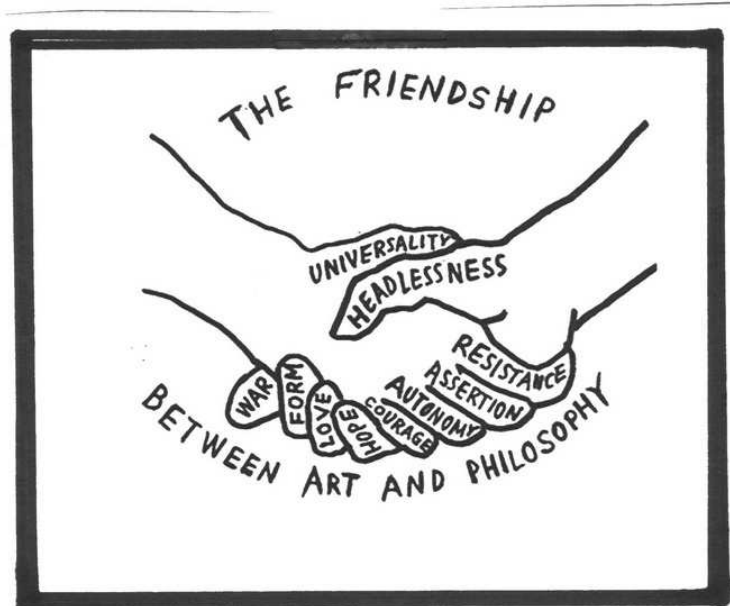
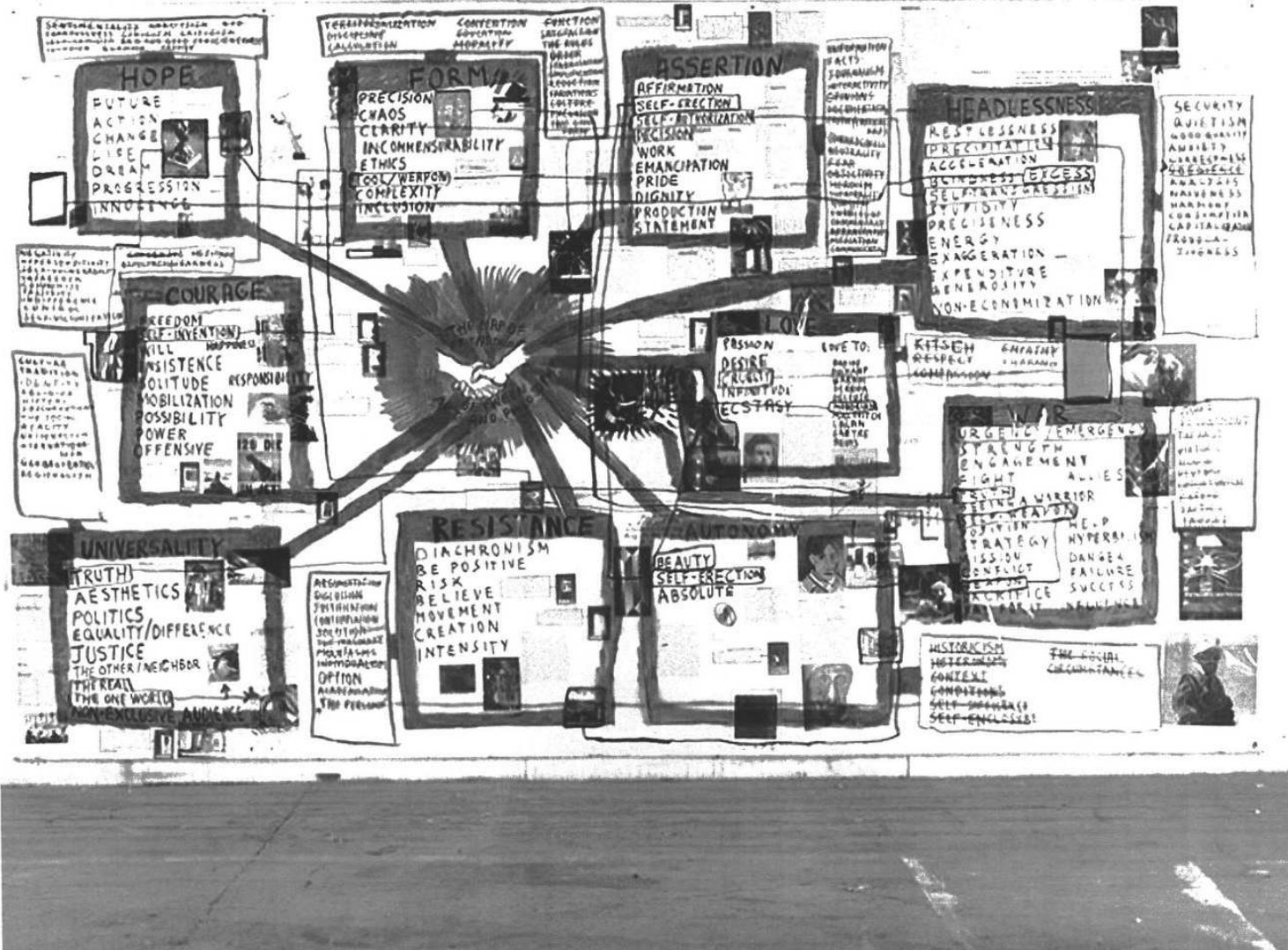
69th Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 7th September 2013
FOR THE LOVE OF PHILOSOPHY
Marcus Steinweg

1. The subject of philosophy is a hyperbolic subject.
2. It is the subject of exaggeration.
3. I call it the subject of its ontological desire.
4. The exaggeration drives the subject beyond the recognized (social, political, cultural, etc.) reality.
5. It causes the subject to collide with the official truths of certainty.
6. The subject crosses the horizon of servitude toward something uncertain.
7. It touches uncertainty itself.
8. It loses the framework of the solidity of certainty.
9. At the same time, the subject, insofar as it asserts itself as subject, must not exhaust itself in mere reaction to the solidity of facts.
10. It is only subject when it risks transgressing the transgression of solidities itself, thus refusing to be the subject of simple resistance, of negativity and its common forms of romanticization.
11. The hyperbolic subject of truth is the subject of the transgression of transgression.
12. It risks contact with truth that prevents its self-enclosure within the horizon of certainty and conscience as well as within that of critical and simply rebellious intelligence and production.
13. It resists the plea for self-inscription in the system of recognition as well as the temptation to reflect itself in the phantasma of a pure exteriority or purity.
14. The hyperbolic subject exaggerates and drives itself into the conflict, the difference between recognition and exaggeration.
15. It relates itself to that which is without relation.
16. It authorizes itself as the site of an absolute conflict.
17. Philosophy and art as radical but abyssal move beyond the order of feasibility, not in any forms of assertion secured by a general principle, not in order to be more turned away from the world and reality than politics within the order of making politics, but to place the intensity of their assertion in another horizon, in an horizon of infinitude and impossibility in which the subject resists absorption by mere interests or inclinations, as Kant says.
18. Art and philosophy are forms of self-acceleration of a desire to assert that breaks through the consensual horizons of discussion, argumentation, communication, explanation, justification or reflexive assurance of oneself.
19. Art and philosophy only exist as this breakthrough, as the violence of transgressing the horizon, as the violence of assertion of a subject of decision, of a decision which breaks through the horizon of the possible to the dimension of the impossible which is the dimension of truth.

"THE MAP OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN ART AND PHILOSOPHY"

(2007)

By Thomas Hirschhorn & Marcus Steinweg



Detail of "The Map of Friendship between Art and Philosophy"

BOOK LIST

Philosophie der Überstürzung
(*Philosophy of Precipitation*) (2013)

ABC der Schönheit
(*ABC of Beauty*) (2013)

INAESTHETICS #4: Philosophy (2013)

Kunst und Philosophie
(*Art and Philosophy*) (2012)

INAESTHETICS #3: Money
(with Wilfried Dickhoff) (2012)

INAESTHETICS #2: Animality
(with Wilfried Dickhoff) (2011)

Aporien der Liebe
(*Aporias of Love*) (2010)

Politik Des Subjekts
(*Politics of the Subject*) (2009)

INAESTHETICS #1: Politics of Art (2009)

Duras (with Rosemarie Trockel) (2008)

INAESTHETICS #0: Theses on Contemporary Art (2008)

Behauptungsphilosophie
(*Philosophy of Assertion*) (2006)

Mutter (Mother) (with Rosemarie Trockel) (2006)

Conférences (2004)

Subjektsingularitäten
(*Subjectsingularities*) (2004)

Bataille Maschine
(*Bataille Machine*) (2003)

Der Ozeanomat: Ereignis Und Immanenz
(*The Oceanomat: Event and Immanence*) (2002)

Autofahren mit Lacan
(*Car Driving with Lacan*) (2001)

Krieg der différance
(*War of Différance*) (2001)

Marcus Steinweg
Philosophie
der Überstürzung

Merve Verlag Berlin

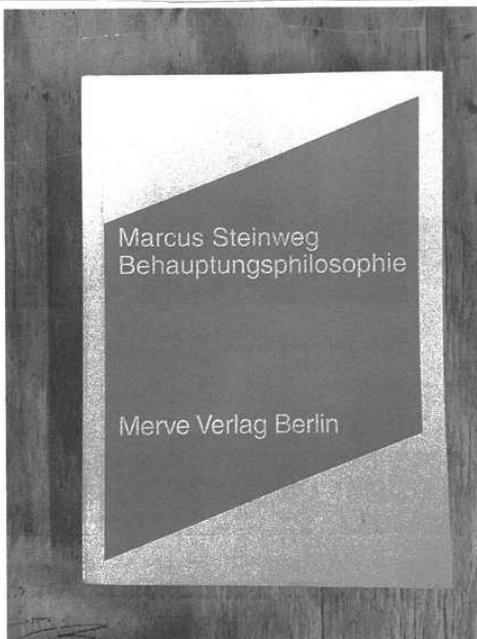
NEW BOOK



Aporien der Liebe
(*Aporias of Love*) (2010)



Duras (with Rosemarie Trockel) (2008)



Behauptungsphilosophie
(*Philosophy of Assertion*) (2006)



Subjektsingularitäten
(*Subjectsingularities*) (2004)



Bataille Maschine
(*Bataille Machine*) (2003)

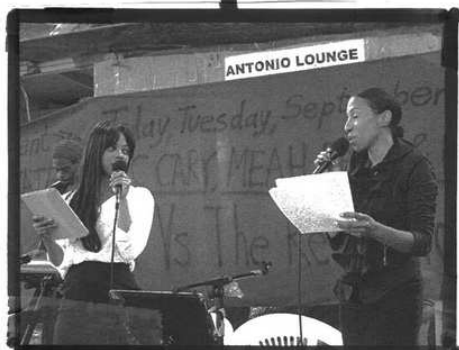
RUNNING EVENT:
GREG TATE, MARC CARY, MEAH PACE & KIM HILL

ANTONIO LOUNGE



ABSTRACT OF "RUNNING EVENT"

DOCUMENTATION
OF "RUNNING EVENT"



TRC Vs. The AACM
or
The Revolutionary Chicken Vs. The Association for The Advancement of Creative Maladjustment
as revealed by Malia Osama 2X + Martine Lucia Queen

A Greg Tate Remix of Malcolm X's 1964 **Ballot or Bullets** speech and Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 speech on **Social Justice** As first performed as a dramatic reading during the occasion of Jason and Alicia Hall Moran's **BLEED** series@ 2012 Whitney Museum Biennial on May 10.

FEATURED PERFORMERS

Kim Hill as MALIA OSAMA 2X

Meah Pace as MARTINE LUCIA QUEEN

Greg Tate as MISTER MISTER INTERLOCUTOR

MUSIC: MARC CARY, renderings of 'How Are You?' by Muhal Richard Abrams and 'Tnoona' by Roscoe Mitchell

RUNNING EVENT:
GREG TATE, MARC CARY, MEAH PACE & KIM HILL

DOCUMENTATION OF "RUNNING EVENT"



WHAT'S GOING ON? FEED BACK

STUDIONYCHA

Visiting the Gramsci Monument at Forest Houses

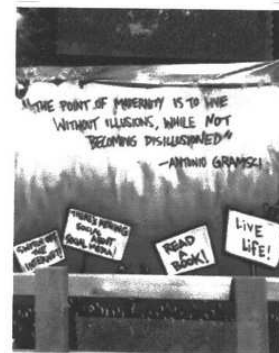
August 1st, 2013

The Gramsci Monument, designed by Thomas Hirschhorn, has been extensively covered in New York and international media, as it is not an everyday occurrence for a renowned European artist to create an art installation in the South Bronx. It is not a residents' creation per se, but it was built on the grounds of NYCHA's Forest Houses with the help of its residents, and we asked another NYCHA resident, our Digital Van instructor, Josh Stevenson, to give us his personal impression of the monument.

When I approached the Gramsci Monument located at Forest Houses in the Bronx, I didn't exactly know what to expect. My first impression visually was that of a refugee camp or a base of some sort. Built entirely out of wood, the structure stands out like a sore thumb among the brick buildings of Forest Houses and the metal playground in front of it. As I walked closer, the first items that caught my eye were various hanging banners spray painted with quotes from Antonio Gramsci himself. Quotes like "Quality should be attributed to human beings, not to things." helped to mentally paint the picture that this establishment was a revolutionary compound of ideas and freedom – erected to inspire and provoke the thoughts of the very community it is being showcased in. Travelling up the wooden ramps and staircases to the nexus of this structure, I then realized how much this monument had to offer.

The Gramsci Monument offers a number of exhibits and facilities for kids, teens and adults to enjoy and take part of. Participants can visit a library and archive dedicated to Antonio Gramsci's literary and other artistic works, a Internet Corner for users to browse the net freely, a Newspaper facility where issues of The Gramsci Monument Newspaper are printed daily, a Radio Studio where DJ Busy Bee plays great soul music over the frequency 99.1 and hosts interviews with residents and guests (my co-worker and I were delighted to take part in one of these interviews), a "bar" where you can order hamburgers, hot dogs, soda and snacks – each under \$3, an art workshop (with an adorable small pool outside of the entrance for the little ones) and a stage area built for lectures and performances by various guests who stop by the monument.

The Gramsci Monument hosts both daily and weekly events such as poetry lectures and workshops, field trips, open mic sessions and seminars – events attributing to the continually active atmosphere of the monument itself. The entire facility is draped in visually stunning graffiti art and all of the art pieces contain the social commentary and messages inspired by Antonio Gramsci. Inspiring messages like "Read a book, Lead your life" are splattered all throughout the monument and serve as an uplifting artistic backdrop to a creative and expressive facility. The motto of the Gramsci Monument is "Energy – YES! Quality – NO!" a statement that art should not be respected in the quality of it's form, but the energy that artistic expression provides.



Overall, my visit to the Gramsci Monument was a very positive and refreshing one as I left the monument smiling and happy for the community of Forest Houses. To have such an artistic workshop in the middle of this neighborhood is a very uplifting and powerful thing and knowing that the people of Forest Houses have a place to enjoy that level of expression is heartwarming.

WHAT'S GOING ON? FEED BACK

Rebelion. El autor de los Quaderni en el Bronx

Portada :: EE.UU.



04-09-2013

"Gramsci pasa el verano en el Bronx"

El autor de los Quaderni en el Bronx

Salvador López Arnal
Rebelión

"Gramsci pasa el verano en el Bronx". Así titulaba Andrea Aguilar [AA] su crónica del pasado lunes en el global-imperial [1]. "El artista Thomas Hirschhorn resucita al revolucionario italiano con una instalación en Nueva York" era el subtítulo. Un pelín peor expresado: el revolucionario sardo no puede haber resucitado, ni siquiera en EEUU, porque nunca ha muerto, nunca han conseguido que sea un "perro muerto".

Las Forest Houses, señala AA, ocupan 15 edificios de 14 pisos de altura; 1.300 apartamentos destinados a vivienda social. Un área de cerca de 7 km² en el corazón del Bronx. "El complejo fue levantado a mediados de los cincuenta", unas dos décadas después de la muerte de Gramsci. "El artista suizo Thomas Hirschhorn [TH] se propuso conectar estos dos dispares puntos y decidió plantar un monumento en honor al pensador marxista entre estas casas del Bronx."

TH, ayudado por un grupo de vecinos, "planeó y levantó una precaria estructura de madera con pasarelas, terrazas y varias habitaciones en uno de los parques que comunican las Forest Houses". Una pancarta de tela clama contra la indiferencia. En el monumento suena jazz, comenta AA, "y un cartel rojo a la entrada de esta peculiar residencia veraniega de Gramsci" anuncia que una conferencia estará dedicada a Wittgenstein. No es imposible que el gran amigo y camarada de Gramsci, Piero Sraffa, llegara a conocer al autor de las *Investigaciones filosóficas*.

"Charlas sobre filosofía al aire libre, un bar-restaurante, una sala de ordenadores, una biblioteca, una emisora de radio o un periódico son algunas de las actividades que desde el 1 de julio y hasta el 15 de septiembre han dado vida a esta pieza-centro comunitario de Hirschhorn". Es la última de una serie con la que el artista suizo ha llevado a barrios humildes de Ámsterdam, Avignon y Kassel monumentos dedicados a Spinoza, Deleuze y Bataille. Gramsci no era Deleuze precisamente pero ahora no importa

En el Bronx, según AA, una pequeña exposición en uno de los habitáculos del monumento "presenta objetos pertenecientes a Gramsci como sus pantuflas, los cubiertos de madera que usó en prisión o su peine, prestados para la ocasión por la Casa Museo Gramsci y la fundación dedicada al filósofo". El proyecto ha sido una iniciativa de la fundación DIA de Nueva York.

"Todo ser humano es un intelectual", un filósofo más bien, reza otro de los carteles del espacio. Saquen Scott, cuenta AA, "es un joven adolescente afroamericano hoy está encargado del periódico donde a diario recogen textos de artistas, hacen breves perfiles de los vecinos y reproducen algunos de los artículos que la prensa ha dedicado al monumento". En la biblioteca, una completa colección sobre fascismo y filosofía. También, desde luego, *Las cenizas de Gramsci* de Pier Paolo Pasolini "o el poemario *Yes Thing, No Thing*" de Edwin Torres.

Hirschhorn dice no poder evaluar el calado que las ideas del revolucionario italiano están teniendo en el barrio. Admite que algunas de las conferencias sólo cuentan con media docena de personas como público. No se desanima. "Es un reto, quizá algo utópico, pero eso también es arte, es un gesto, una reafirmación de poder", asegura. De otro poder por supuesto, del poder popular, del ciudadano, del democrático. Lo más inesperado, prosigue el artista suizo, "de esta experiencia ha sido la simpatía de los vecinos, la respetuosa acogida que han dado al que fuera líder y uno de los fundadores del PCI".

La obra de Hirschhorn también ha atraído inusuales visitas a las Forest Houses. Críticos de arte, estudiantes de filosofía llegados de Manhattan o Brooklyn. "La gente que vive en estos barrios es muy interesante, las visitas de gente de otros lugares no es uno de los objetivos de mi obra, más bien algo que tengo que aceptar. Puede generar algo de escepticismo entre los vecinos, pero no hostilidad. Lo que de verdad busco es que venga la gente que reside en estas casas y lo disfruten y a veces resulta más difícil que atraer a la gente de Manhattan". Gramsci en sus *Cuadernos*, recuerda AA, ya dijo que: "La realidad existe independientemente del individuo pensante".

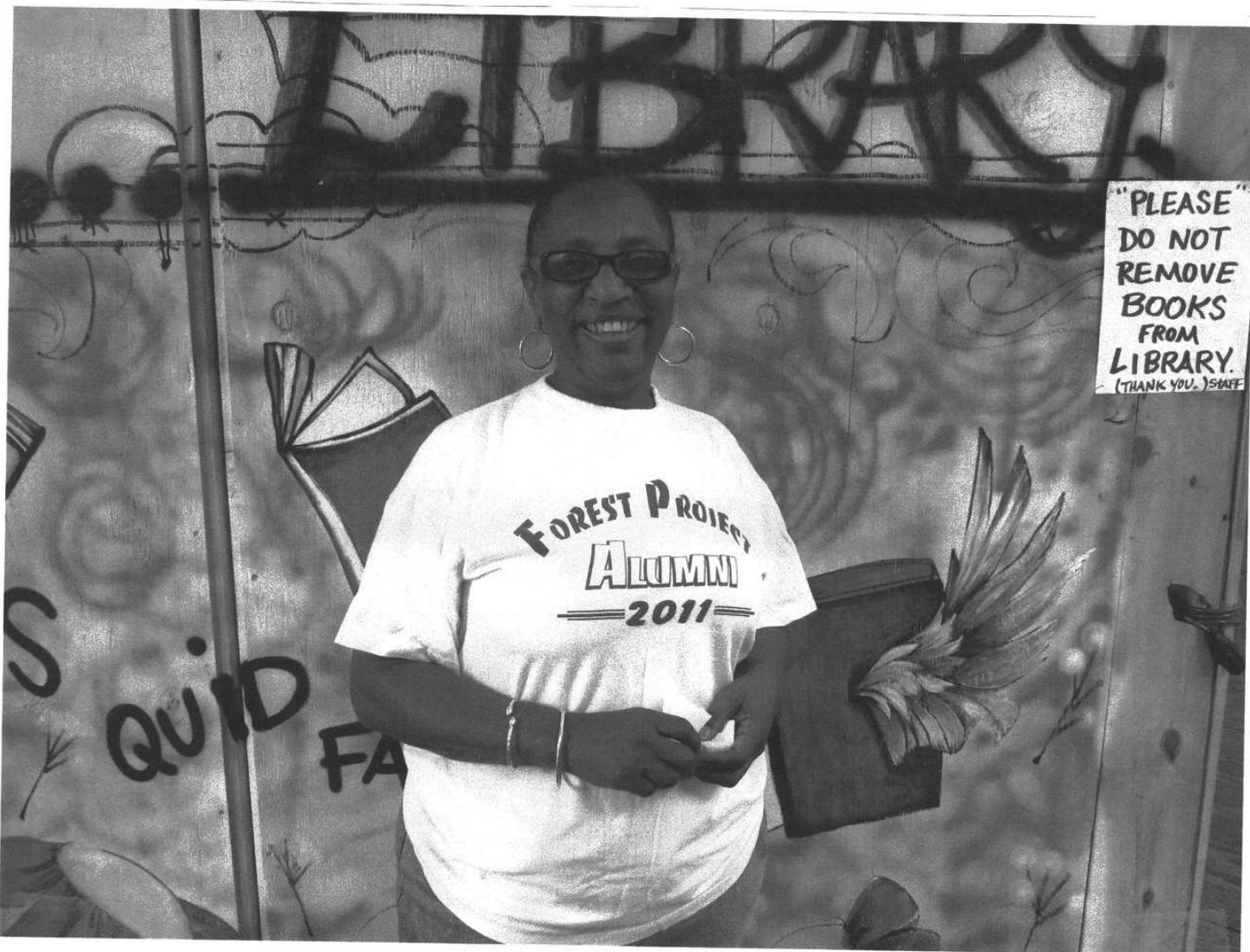
No es, por supuesto, la reflexión más interesante y singular de un filósofo comunista que también amaba a Pascoli.

Notas:

[1] http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2013/08/29/actualidad/1377799829_074574.html

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