

THE GRAMSCI MONUMENT.

NEWSPAPER

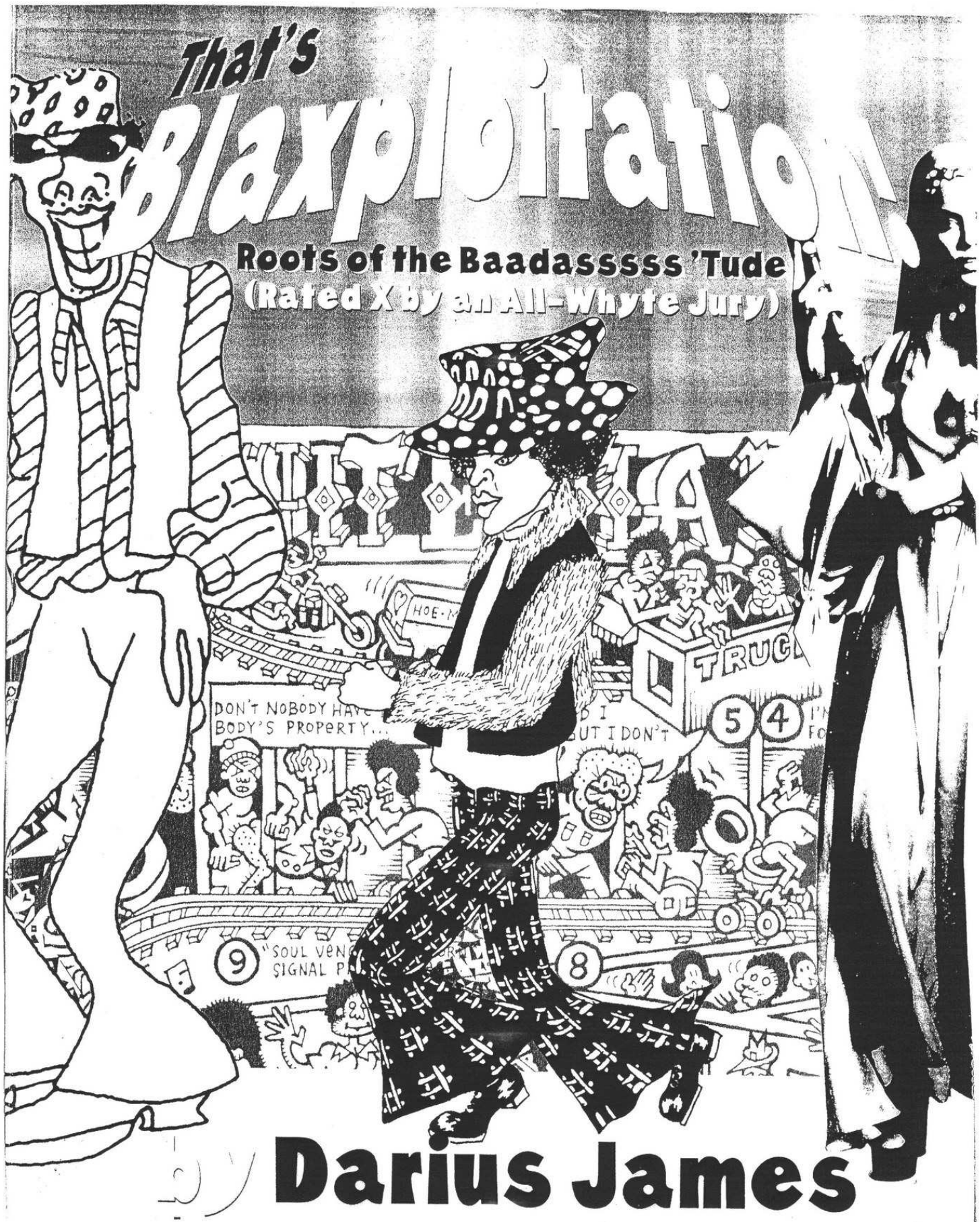
Editors:
LAKESHA BRYANT
and
SAQUAN SCOTT

"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)



July 10th, 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



“Remember the phrases ‘Power to the People!’, ‘Off the Pig!’ and ‘Free Huey!’? Can you stretch your mind back to a time when your hair looked like a meticulously tended shrub on the White House lawn, providing the perfect cushion against the blows of a racist pig’s nightstick? Do you remember rakin’ out the naps with a metal sponge-cake cutter which you also used to pacify obstreperous, foul-mouthed Caucasians during your high school’s springtime race riots? *You do?* You must be one *old-ass* muthafucka then!”

By Darius James

THAT’S BLAXPLOITATION!

FOREWARNING

That’s *Blaxploitation!* is not an exhaustive, encyclopedic or definitive work on the era and its films. Nor does it pretend to be. I never intended this book to be a serious, indepth study of the 1970s or 1970s black film culture. If this were my intent, a great many more topics would have been dealt with in these pages. For example, you won’t find a discussion of the popular black music of the seventies or the soundtracks of films described in this book. I’m sure this seems absurd to anyone even remotely familiar with the period (after all, a few bars of Isaac Hayes’s score for *Shaft* is enough to invoke, in most people’s minds, insurrectionary images of leather-clad black men poised to challenge the hegemony of whyte male power—a point not lost on Courtney Love in her ironic use of the theme from *Shaft* in the movie, *Tank Girl*); but, frankly, I didn’t really give a fuck about music in the seventies.

A whole other area not discussed in this book is fashion. You’d easily understand why if you ever saw me in public. I dress like a bum. In fact, I dress like a bum timelocked in the seventies. And you won’t find photos of the customized pimpmobiles that tooled through Times Square in the 1970s. That’s a book unto itself. It’s also not the function of this book to explain black people, the products created by black people, or those products that are created by whytes and peopled with blacks. I did not write this book with aspirations of grinning in front of a television camera at the next NAACP Image Award ceremony. I chose this subject because:

1. I thought I might be able to pay the rent on my apartment with the advance I received for this book. (I was sadly mistaken. It

THAT'S BLAXPLOITATION!

2. I spend a lot of money on video rentals and cult-movie fanzines. And I want to claim these items on my tax forms. I hoped, too, that this book would encourage video companies to send me preview tapes of forthcoming titles with the idea that I would include it in a later revised and expanded edition of this book.
3. In the libraries of specialist video-rental stores, like NYC's Kim's Video, you can find just about any obscure pig-fucking, psycho-hillbilly-slasher-movie ever lensed in the swamps of Louisiana; but precious little in the way of blaxploitation films. And I could find no *popular* works on the genre in the bookstores.

What this book became was an exploration of what my parents, neighbors, teachers and a battery of psychiatrists have said is my "bad attitude." The foundations of that "attitude" is what I now call *The Trinity of The Pusher, The Pimp and The Panther*; my models of "bad" behavior. I think this is actually an important point to consider, especially after one realizes yesteryear's Superfly cult fathered today's brood of gun-loco, inner-city cowboys. Also, as a child of blaxploitation films, my favorite one-liner is "kill whytie." I *roar* every time I hear it, rolling around on the floor in pissed-pants laughter. Whether it's a movie militant in black beret steppin' up to the "Man," or an anti-colonial African Mau-Mau slitting the throat of a sleeping Brit, it just cracks me up. Don't know why I find the idea of dead whyte people so goddamned funny. On the other hand, I can't stomach much in the more recent cycle of black films. Don't like watching black people kill other black people. Don't know why on that one either. I guess I'm a traditionalist that way.

What you really hold in your hands is a celebration and a memoir. As you skip down the chocolate path of memory lane, you'll encounter loads of unlawfully sarcastic "film comments"; hundreds of mediocre reproductions of black and white movie stills; bizarre, self-serving interviews; smutty comics; parodies; and promotional booklets of the era's most popular films. This book also attempts to recreate the nineteen seventies by portraying the depraved mental state of one particular Afro-American adolescent: *me*. What began as an affectionate look back at my adolescence, and the varied forms of "entertainment" offered in the seventies, gradually evolved into an informal examination of a pop-

ular black American pastime: *Signifyin'*. I didn't plan it that way. It just happened. Call me *triflin'*.

When I gave some actual thought to my adolescence, I realized—once the haze of reefer smoke clouding the memories I have of my past began to lift—I was pissed off most of the time (At what? You name it and I was pissed at it. *And I wanted to piss on it!*). My only relief was in the grotesque humor I found in the things presented in this book.

So, other than the unlikelihood of selling jillions of copies, I have only two hopes for this book:

1. It will start an explosion of seventies film & funk fanzines like David Mills's exceptional *UnCut Funk*—a 'zine truly devoted to the excavation of the "BaadAsssss 'Tude."
2. Video companies will release the entire catalogue of seventies black films on the market—and then, finally, I'll be able to watch *The Zombies of Sugar Hill* uncut and without commercial interruption.

JUDITH BUTLER

THE CONTINUATION OF
“BODIES IN ALLIANCE AND THE POLITICS OF
THE STREET”



The street scenes become politically potent only when and if we have a visual and audible version of the scene communicated in live time, so that the media does not merely report the scene, but is part of the scene and the action; indeed, the media *is* the scene or the space in its extended and replicable visual and audible dimensions. One way of stating this is simply that the media extends the scene visually and audibly and participates in the delimitation and transposability of the scene. Put differently, the media constitutes the scene in a time and place that includes and exceeds its local instantiation. Although the scene is surely and emphatically local, and those who are elsewhere have the sense that they are getting some direct access through the images and sounds they receive. That is true, but they do not know how the editing takes place, which scene conveys and travels, and which scenes remain obdurately outside the frame. When the scene does travel, it is both there *and* here, and if it were not spanning both locations – indeed, multiple locations – it would not be the scene that it is. Its locality is not denied by the fact that the scene is communicated beyond itself, and so constituted in a global

media; it depends on that mediation to take place as the event that it is. This means that the local must be recast outside itself in order to be established as local, and this means that it is only through a certain globalizing media that the local can be established, and that something can really happen there. Of course, many things do happen outside the frame of the camera or other digital media devices, and the media can just as easily implement censorship as oppose it. There are many local events that are never recorded and broadcast, and some important reasons why. But when the event does travel and manages to summon and sustain global outrage and pressure, which includes the power to stop markets or to sever diplomatic relations, then the local will have to be established time and again in a circuitry that exceeds the local at every instant. And yet, there remains something localized that cannot and does not travel in that way, and the scene could not be the scene if we did not understand that some people are at risk, and the risk is run precisely by those bodies on the street. If they are transported in one way, they are surely left in place in another, holding the camera or the cell phone, face to face with those they oppose, unprotected, injurable, injured, persistent, if not insurgent. It matters that those bodies carry cell phones, relaying messages and images, and so when they are attacked, it is more often than not in some relation to the camera or the video recorder. It can be an effort to destroy the camera and its user, or it can be a spectacle of destruction for the camera, a media event produced as a warning or a threat. Or it can be a way to stop anymore organizing. Is the action of the body separable from its technology, and how does the technology determine new forms of political action? And when censorship or violence are directed against those bodies, are they not also directed against its access to media, and in order to establish hegemonic control over which images travel, and which do not?

Of course, the dominant media is corporately owned, exercising its own kinds of censorship and incitement. And yet, it still seems important to affirm that the freedom of the media to broadcast from these sites is itself an exercise of freedom, and so a mode of exercising rights, especially when it is rogue media, from the street, evading the censor, where the activation of the instrument is part of the bodily action itself. So the media not only reports on social and political movements that are laying claim to freedom and justice in various ways; the media is also exercising one of those freedoms for which the social movement struggles. I do not mean by this claim to suggest that all media is involved in the

struggle for political freedom and social justice (we know, of course, that it is not). Of course, it matters which global media does the reporting and how. My point is that sometimes private media devices become global precisely at the moment in which they overcome modes of censorship to report protests and, in that way, become part of the protest itself.

What bodies are doing on the street when they are demonstrating, is linked fundamentally to what communication devices and technologies are doing when they "report" on what is happening in the street. These are different actions, but they both require bodily actions. The one exercise of freedom is linked to the other exercise, which means that both are ways of exercising rights, and that jointly they bring a space of appearance into being and secure its transposability. Although some may wager that the exercise of rights now takes place quite at the expense of bodies on the street, that twitter and other virtual technologies have led to a disembodiment of the public sphere, I disagree. The media requires

those bodies on the street to have an event, even as the street requires the media to exist in a global arena. But under conditions when those with cameras or internet capacities are imprisoned or tortured or deported, then the use of the technology effectively implicates the body. Not only must someone's hand tap and send, but someone's body is on the line if that tapping and sending gets traced. In other words, localization is hardly overcome through the use of a media that potentially transmits globally. And if this conjuncture of street and media constitutes a very contemporary version of the public sphere, then bodies on the line have to be thought as both there and here, now and then, transported and stationary, with very different political consequences following from those two modalities of space and time.

It matters that it is public squares that are filled to the brim, that people eat and sleep there, sing and refuse to cede that space, as we saw in Tahrir Square, and continue to see on a daily basis. It matters as well that it is public educational buildings that have been seized in Athens, London, and Berkeley. At Berkeley, buildings were seized, and trespassing fines were handed out. In some cases, students were accused of destroying private property. But these very allegations raised the question of whether the university is public or private. The stated aim of the protest – to seize the building and to sequester themselves there – was a way to gain a platform, indeed, a way to secure the material conditions for appearing in public. Such actions generally do not take place when effective platforms are already available. The students there, but also at Goldsmiths College in the UK more recently were seizing buildings as a way to lay claim to buildings that ought properly, now and in the future, to belong to public education. That doesn't mean that every time these buildings are seized it is justifiable, but let us be alert to what is at stake here: the symbolic meaning of seizing these buildings is that these buildings belong to the public, to public education; it is precisely the access to public education which is being undermined by fee and tuition hikes and budget cuts; we should not be surprised that the protest took the form of seizing the buildings, performatively laying claim to public education, insisting on gaining literal access to the buildings of public education precisely at a moment, historically, when that access is being shut down. In other words, no positive law justifies these actions that oppose the institutionalization of unjust or exclusionary forms of power. So can we say that these actions are nevertheless an exercise of a right and, if so, what kind?

And 2Morrow by Tupac Shakur

Today is filled with anger
fueled with hidden hate
scared of being outcast
afraid of common fate
Today is built on tragedy
which no one wants 2 face
nightmares 2 humanities
and morally disgraced
Tonight is filled with rage
violence in the air
children bred with ruthlessness
because no one at home cares
Tonight I lay my head down
but the pressure never stops
knowing at my sanity
content when I am dropped
But 2morrow I c changed
a chance 2 build a new
Built on spirit intent of Heart
and ideals
based on truth
and tomorrow I wake with secon
and strong because of pride
2 know I fought with all my hear
dream alive

INTERVIEW BETWEEN KAELEN WILSON – GOLDIE AND YASMIL RAYMOND

RE: A FEW QUESTIONS ON GRAMSCI MONUMENT

From: Raymond, Yasmil
Sent: Tuesday, July 09, 2013 12:30 AM
To: kaelen wilson-goldie
Subject: RE: a few questions on gramsci monument

Dear Kaelen,
Thank you for your message and interest in Thomas Hirschhorn's Gramsci Monument. Please see below answers to your questions. If you have additional questions, please feel free to call me on my mobile at 347-498-4434 tomorrow. I am available to speak between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.
With best regards,
Yasmil

Answers:

- How did you come to take on the title of "ambassador" for this project?

TH mentioned early on that he was planning to have an "ambassador" at the Gramsci Monument. He developed this concept at the Spinoza Festival in Biljmer (outside of Amsterdam) in 2009. The art historian Vittoria Martini played the role of "ambassador" then. I asked TH if I could apply for the job.

- Was there any reason why "curator" seemed wrong, and "ambassador" right?

I worked with Thomas on two occasions prior to Gramsci Monument. I understood that there was a limit to my role as curator given the scale and complexity of this artwork, that I needed to insert myself within the framework of his project.

- I love the image and meaning and explanation of your newspaper piece, but maybe going back a step, why did it seem necessary to take on this new and/or differently defined role?

The duties of the "ambassador" as defined by TH encapsulate what I've always considered to be my role as a curator, that is, to answer questions concerning art. However, the "job description" also required that I immersed myself in the project beyond the logistics and be part of what Hirschhorn termed "presence and production" and be available. In order to be better at being "present" I have been trying to put aside my iPhone and resist the impulse of replying to emails throughout the day, to learn how to be a greeter, to learn how to approach people and generate conversations. Contrary to "ambassador," the title of curator is confusing and enigmatic, the average person doesn't know what it means. Ambassador is more friendly and in the context of a work of art also humorous. As ambassador I get to work 7 days a week, from 10 am to 7 pm, the same as Dia's curator but the difference is that I get to live within walking distance from my office and share an apartment with three other individuals Lex Brown, the art teacher; Marcus Steinweg, the philosopher; and Romain Lopez, documentarian.

- And allegorically, who or what is your home state, and who or what is the foreign country with whom you are liaising and representing your state's interests?

The home country is art. The foreign country is Thomas Hirschhorn's Gramsci Monument.

2. Is it possible, even roughly, to say what the total budget for Gramsci Monument is? Or even how it compares to the budgets of the other monuments, or to other, similarly scaled public projects by Dia, or, say, a decent-sized solo exhibition of an artist of Hirschhorn's stature, from your experience? I think I have a sense of the expenditure in terms of labor, energy, thought, but I really have no sense at all of the finances and/or financial complexities of a project like this.

Apples and oranges.

3. If I understand things correctly, Hirschhorn decided long ago to do the four monuments to Spinoza, Deleuze, Bataille and Gramsci. At what point, and how, was it determined that Dia would be the institution to realize the Gramsci monument in New York?

Originally TH began conversations with Tom Eccles back when he was working at Public Art Fund (in 2006 or 07 -- check with TH). I remember talking about it when we met in Minneapolis in 2006. Tom went to Bard/CCS and TH put the project on the shelf of "unrealized projects" in his studio. I began working at Dia in 2009 and began conversations with TH in 2010. We formalized the invitation in 2011 and he did a "handshake" with Philippe Vergne by the end of the year. TH began doing "field work" in 2012, visited 47 housing developments and by summer 2012 he narrowed his options to 12 sites, all in the Bronx. My team helped him arranged meetings with local organizations and community centers at the sites. By fall 2012 he had narrowed the list to 4. He visited Forest Houses 5 times before he was introduced to Erik Farmer, the President of the Residents Association. By early December 2012, Erik told Thomas to do it at Forest Houses. On January 22, 2013, Erik Farmer accompanied Thomas and I to NYCHA's headquarters to meet with Chairman John Rhea. The meeting lasted 45 minutes. We obtained permission to pursue our plans to open the project on July 1.

- Is there anything specific to the situation in the Bronx that makes the substance of Gramsci's work particularly apt (I know there is a lot in Hirschhorn's work and writing that moves pretty brilliantly against that idea) or is it, essentially, arbitrary to have Gramsci in Forest Houses -- another way of asking this question, could it have been another, equally uncompromising and utopian thinker?

Antonio Gramsci is only important to TH. Gramsci's writing is the "flame" that generated the artwork but this is independent of the site, the spot where the monument was installed. I hope that the resonance of Gramsci's legacy, his terms (i.e. hegemony, common sense, organic intellectual, passive revolution, etc) are relevant to every single individual who visits the monument regardless of their home address.

4. This is not a trouble-making question, but I'm curious, did it ever give you pause, or has it ever come up in discussion or debate in the process of planning Gramsci Monument, that the subjects of Hirschhorn's four altars, eight kiosks and four monuments are all men? Not a woman among them? Does this mean...anything? To you or to Dia or to anyone involved who may have raised this point previously?

TH dedicated kiosks and in-door works to female thinkers/writers and writers he admires (i.e. Rosa Luxembour, Hannah Arendt, Emma Kunz, Ingeborg Bachmann, Meret Oppenheim) but the monuments are based on a drawing that he made early on in his practice (in 1998 or 99). In this diagram he drew a circle inside a square. The circle is divided in 4 parts. Inside the triangles he wrote the 4 terms that make the "force fields" in his work, in his understanding of art: love, politics, ethics, and aesthetics. For each field he assigned the name of a philosopher who focused on redefining these terms, he selected the philosophers based on the books they wrote not on their genders. The philosophers had to shared 2 fields, to stand (so to speak) in-between 2 of the force fields. For example: Spinoza stood for the understanding of love and ethics; Delleuze for ethics and aesthetics; Bataille for aesthetics and politics and Gramsci, for politics and love. TH can elaborate on this if you like.

5. What will you work on next in your capacity as the curator of Dia, when Gramsci Monument is done?

I'll return to open the fall season of public programs in Chelsea (Artists on Artists Lecture Series, Readings in Contemporary Poetry, and Discussions in Contemporary Culture). We have Ian Wilson conducting "Discussions" for the third year, a performance series with Steve Paxton and preparations for the retrospective of Carl Andre's work opening in May 2014...and the future commissions for 2015 and 2016.

A FLYER DISTRIBUTED IN NYC TO SUPPORT THE DEMAND OF RELEASE OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI FROM PRISON (1935)

Long Live the International Working Class Solidarity!

Hail the Conditional Release of ANTONIO GRAMSCI, Leader of the Communist Party of Italy! Let us continue the fight for his complete freedom!
DEMAND THE FREEDOM OF ALL ANTI-FASCIST PRISONERS!
CELEBRATE THE VICTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT!

Come to the
VICTORY MASS MEETING
Wednesday, January 16, at 7:30 p. m.
AT
IRVING PLAZA HALL
Irving Place and 19th St., N.Y.C.

BOB MINOR **RICHARD B. MOORE**
Member Central Executive, Communist Party U.S.A. *Organizer, International Labor Defense*

TITO NUNZIO
Editor "United Worker"

TOM DE FAZIO
Chairman

PELLOW WOMEN

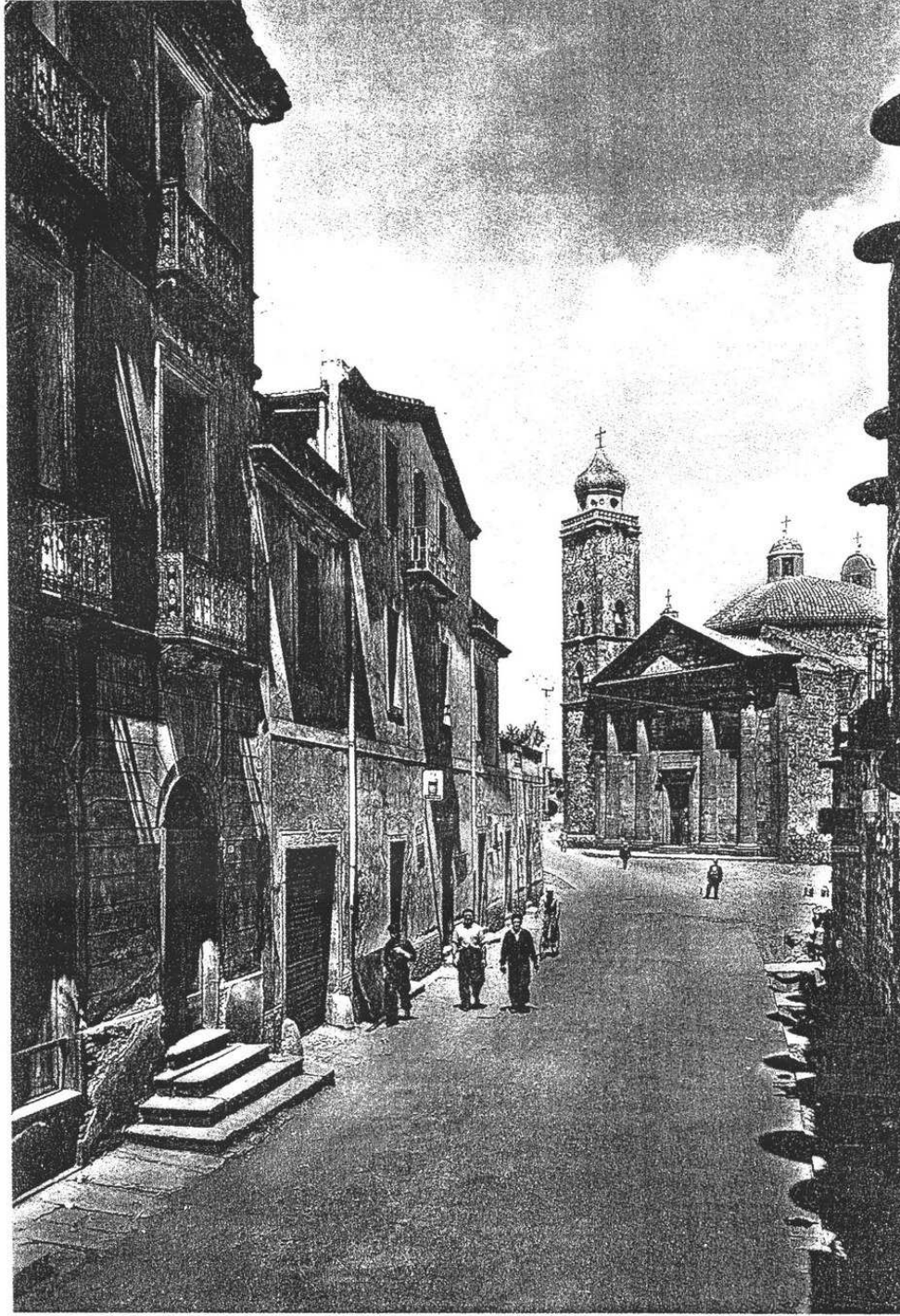
Antonio Gramsci, the leader of the revolutionary proletariat of Italy, has been released from the Fascist jail after a long fight of the world proletariat for his liberation. He was arrested in 1926 and sentenced to 21 years of jail for the only crime: for leading the fight of Italian proletarians against imperialism and Fascism.

The overwhelming victory of the proletariat shows once more the power of mass organs, which struggle will force Italian Fascism to grant the unconditional freedom to Gramsci and the other fighting anti-fascist heroes ahead in the world Fascist dungeons.

All Out to the Victory Mass Meeting!

Augustine Communist Party U.S.A., District 2, International Labor Defense, Italian Federation of Workers Clubs.





PICTURE OF "CORSO
UMBERTO" IN
GHILERVA, DURING
THE 30ST.

DAILY LECTURE BY MARCUS STEINWEG

10th Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 10th July 2013

ANTIGONE'S BEAUTY

Marcus Steinweg

As headless as this crazy child may be: Antigone is aware of her own precision. Consistently she overhears Ismene's voice, representing the general doxa. What speaks through Ismene is established reason. Ismene knows nothing but caution, contemplation, comparison. Antigone, however, verges on the delusion of the subject. Her beauty, as Jacques Lacan described it, lies in her insistence and her idleness, leading towards the threshold of her life.

More than merely its end, this edge marks the evidence of the antagonist subject. Lacan addressed it as Antigone's *reverberation*, as *éclat*, which might be translated as *glamour* and *scandal*. What is essential is that a boundary is overstepped, initially that of the law represented by Creon, which prohibits the burial of her brother Polynices. And yet, this transgression cannot lead into a positive realm beyond the edge. Antigone in no way exemplifies the subject of a romanticism of transgression, which successfully eludes the established rule of law in order to exist in virtually full autonomy: we know that a dismal rock cut tomb awaits Antigone. By responding to Creon in his own language, the „language of the state“, or as we may say, *reality*, Antigone's politics is, according to Judith Butler, „not of oppositional purity but of the scandalously impure.“ She „asserts herself through appropriating the voice of the other, the one to whom she is opposed; thus her autonomy is gained through the appropriation of the authoritative voice of the one she resists, an appropriation that has within it traces of a simultaneous refusal and assimilation of that very authority.“ If autonomy exists – an infinitesimal quantum of autonomy – then only as a *claim* in the midst of real heteronomy.

One cannot help but to compromise oneself. One is already compromised. No subject is ever intact (or, as Adorno puts it: „None is *tabula rasa*.“). There is no integrity untouched by the facts. The incommensurable measure of freedom, which Antigone allows herself despite Creon, articulates itself only in relation to him and the authority represented by him, i.e., the authority of the effective law: the „law of the day“ (of the polis, the constituted reality), which has been contrasted with the „law of the night“ (of gods, family, Hades).

The antagonistic desire is desire for autonomy, embedded into the heteronomous, an autonomy from *this* world, if you will, one turned towards the heteronomous as the mundane *nomos*. Something like self-determination can only exist with a window towards heteronomy, in the here and now of codified reality. Freedom is readable only in relation to objective non-freedom, sovereignty is nothing but a mode of the factual lack of sovereignty.

„We will“, Jean-Luc Nancy once said, „not oppose autonomy with heteronomy, with which it forms a pair. Being heteronomous toward another subject that is itself autonomous changes nothing, regardless of whether this other autonomous thing is named god, the market, technics, or life. But, in order to open a new path, we could try out the word *exonomy*. This word would evoke a law that would not be the law of the same or of the other, but one that would be inappropriate by either the same or the other. Just as *exogamy* goes outside of kinship, *exonomy* moves out of the binary familiarity of the self and the other.“ Instead of rejecting the realities given, Antigone relates to them by objecting to them. At the very threshold of the law she insists on the threshold. She does so beautifully (and gracefully and sexily): she withdraws from both the assimilation to the extant and the sublimation into the beyond. She takes on the burden of the threshold, as if she knew that, in doing so, she opens herself up towards the unliveable and her death.

Now one cannot sacrifice one's life to the unliveable without being a lofty idiot. The philosophical perspective into which the antagonistic subject puts itself is not transcendence. It's neither about higher values nor about a divine law superior to a human one. It's not even about a childish heroism, or, as we would say today, about narcissistic *radical chic*. It is about the cleft dividing each and every subject: into subject and object, into a spontaneous agent and a perceptive receptor, into an animal ensnared in its immanence and a vector penetrating this immanence. Antigone moves on a level of a certain immanence perforated by *immanent transcendence*. This is the frail ground of a reality expanded by its incommensurable parts. Everything about her, her desire, her certainties and uncertainties, happens in

the here and now of a world without any ultimate consistency. However, this world without outcome is no determined space. It is equipped with an instability, which reassures the subject in its own inconsistency. What could this inconsistency indicate but the evidence/truth of the subject, as not being completely the object of a web of determinants? Could Antigone's evidence lie in this non-idealistic conception of freedom: in a claim of freedom, which runs through all the stages of objective non-freedom? There is the appeal for a certain kind of resistance and freedom connected to Antigone. Antigone barricades herself from the established order, in order to insist on her own head, head- and reckless as this might seem. Antigone's evidence lies in her acceleration towards non-sense, which constitutes the truth of her situation. „Evidence refers to what is obvious, what makes sense, what is striking and, by the same token, opens and gives a chance and an opportunity to meaning. Its truth is something that grips and does not have to correspond to any given criteria. Nor does evidence work as unconcealment, for it always keeps a secret or an essential reserve: its very light is reserved, and its provenance.“ The fascination with *Antigone* is related to this light, this evidence, which obscures its sense by „casting different lights on the familiar“, as Adorno calls it, or, as Wittgenstein says, „throwing new light on the facts.“

A truth which does not need to correspond to given criteria can only be a lawless truth. Blind or headless truth to which a child spiralling out of control commits. A truth founded not on any knowledge, which therefore remains unproven and unjustified. That's what we call evidence: an unfounded, abysmal, dark truth, like the truth of love or passion. There are things like precise passions, which draw their conclusiveness from their own unfoundedness. Not because they were arbitrary, but because they intervene with the reality of the subject with a momentum which forces this reality to redefine itself. The experience of philosophy connects the experience of art with the antagonistic opening towards evidences, which obscure the established model of reality in order to newly expose or re-expose it.

EMAIL FEED BACK OF THE DAY!

Gesendet: Montag, 08. Juli 2013 um 20:43 Uhr
Von: "Bernard Perretti" <bperretti@yahoo.com>
An: "Marcus Steinweg" <m.steinweg@web.de>
Betreff: Re: oh...

Thank you for your response and kind comment on our conversation at the Gramsci opening. I tend to be sporadic when it comes to opening e-mails. I just now read three messages by you. Know that our conversation was pleasurable for me as well as it may have been for you.

The Gramsci project (Monument), so far as I have experienced it after two visits obsesses me - positively for the most part. The subject (or apparent subject) of the project - Gramsci - is certainly part of the fascination. I grew up in what was basically a European home, albeit in New York City. My father and his father before him were worker's rights advocates. Despite being a trained machinist my Grandfather was constantly fired from jobs because of his union organizing activities. My father, likewise, was a true believer in socio-political issues that for the most part, Europeans take for granted. I can say that in one sense, I was never entirely an "American" Rebellion was part of my heritage. But it was rebellion in the tradition of Camus, not the colonial rebellion of North America. Still, I am here as an existential matter of fact, which Sartre termed a "co-efficient of adversity". But, if you will indulge me briefly you are at this moment here as well, and like myself (and Thomas) if I may say so, European to the core. It leaves me wondering how you respond to being in the bowels of a public housing development that is itself in the bowels of Empire? For myself, it seems like the right place to be, at least in theory and is surely part of the positivity I expressed earlier. , And yet, there remains a persistent question that tips the teeter-totter of rationality in unpredictable ways (still by and large to the good). Imagining an art-i-factuality that approximates the dynamic/organic Life forms of nature rather than merely representing them has been a universal artistic goal that I'm sure predates Plato. Understandably, I look ahead to such a realization at Gramsci.

Still, I have troublesome thoughts - blurry edges as it were - among the positives. (again, not a bad thing in itself) I wonder, for example, if certain aspects of the project might be over-rationalized and/or over-engineered, which may not be in the end as organic or as gracefully natural as they might appear to be in the abstract? The children's art workshop segment of the program during the opening session comes to mind. From the little - and I must emphasize "little" exposure I had to the program left me puzzled as to the essential goals and methods that were put into play. Why was the art teacher/mentor standing, sometimes sitting on the enormous work table like an attractive actress on an elevated stage replete with the enormous canvas (a future backdrop perhaps?) on which the children were expected to "express" their artistic sensibilities in honor, presumably, of Gramsci? The teacher's "position" and stage presence as described

projected an obvious author-itative image that was bound to dominate the children's consciousness to the detriment of their own imagination. Was this not a somewhat odd, even "fascistic" approach to garnering a child's creativity? And what of the grandiosity of the canvas itself? Communal to be sure. But at the same time so antithetical to the "natural" scale of a child's perceptions which is, by its nature antithetical to, say, the megalomania of Abstract Expressionism. How, I had to ask myself, was Gramsci served by this approach to child art? Is this how the project purports to re-define "monumentality"?

Then again, how can I truly see/know how the process is working and playing out when I see/know only through the eyes of a visiting sight-seer, or theater-goer - one who comes and goes, but who, during intermission remains sightless between the scenes of a multi-act play? Visiting is necessarily observing, but not of necessity seeing.

For you. experiencing the project moment by moment is seeing a dramatic monumentality in its entirety - mentally, physically with all of its occasional anomalies intact. The same is true for Yasmil, and of course Thomas, but above all, for the residents of the houses who in-dwell - and are, ipso facto, the ultimate arbiters of how totally Gramsci's art-i-factuality is realized.

In the meantime, I'm staggered by the scope of your projected lectures. The task you have set for yourself - given the venue - is daunting. I try to imagine "performing" such a "monumental undertaking on a daily basis and ergo, I imagine myself in the role of a Wagnerian Helden-tenor buckling under the weight of my own aloneness. I wish you well in this adventure. I admire your stamina, and wish you well.

As for the project as a whole I am hedging my bets on a positive outcome. Now the question is how to work out the logistics of getting to Gramsci and not getting worn out or "lost" in the effort. This bound to be an on-going story.

-Bernard Perretti

RESIDENT OF THE DAY



My Name is Freddy Velez, single parent for 20yrs, resident of Forest Houses for 50yrs and managed youth baseball for 30yrs. in the SouthBronx. Growing up in the South Bronx @Forest Houses i was always inspired by my neighbors to be good in school and play baseball.

In 1981 i received a Baseball scholarship @Alfred eSmith HS to Florida State University where i studied Construction Technology, Sociology and College Baseball.

After working 30 yrs. in NewYork in 2009 i was told I had Diabetes, and in 2011 i was diagnosed with 2 Vessel Heart Disease, my Life had taken a drastic turn when i had 5 Heart Stent Implants in my Left and Right Ventricles from 2011-2012.

The situations continued throughout the next 2 yrs. as my Dad passed away (RIP) on Feb 6, 2013 from Heart Disease.

On May 2013 I decided to retire for the right reasons, 1st my health and well being, and to be able to enjoy a relaxing life that i never had . I continued my Heart Rehabilitation to restore my Life even though doctors said ill never be the same again I would not give up, loosingbiography 57 lbs in one yr. with a new Diet along with managing my blood sugar and pressure. I would not give up .

One spring day I see an intelligent looking man @TheForest Diamond supervising a group of hard working construction workers made up by the Residents of Forest Houses.

The Man was, Artist Mr Thomas Hirschhorn which upon introducing himself to me and my mother Rosa he spoke of his mission to build The Gramsci Monument.

I was immediately inspired by Thomas as he showed me the Antonio Gramsci Prison Notes and his words to be introduced to our community along with an Event.

I was asked by this Artist to translate these prison notes to hang in the our community, At this moment inspiration took my thoughts out of retirement and began to help on making this transition of motivation from this Artists Inspiration.

Today July 8, 2013 after my 1st week working along with the Artist,Thomas Hirschhorn , Ambassador Yasmil Raymond , Dia Art Foundation, Erik Farmer President of our Residents of NYCHA and his construction crew and staff.

It's with Great Pleasure to be able toThank You ,Thomas Hirschhorn for inviting me to help in the Antonio Gramsci Monument @Forest Houses

Librarian @ Gramsci Monument ; Freddy Velez
Special Thanks to my Mother RosaVelez for being the Best Mom A Son could have .

(I've Been Inspired to Inspire Others)