

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 23rd, 2013 - Forest Houses, Bronx, NY

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LIFE OF A REVOLUTIONARY

GIUSEPPE FIORI

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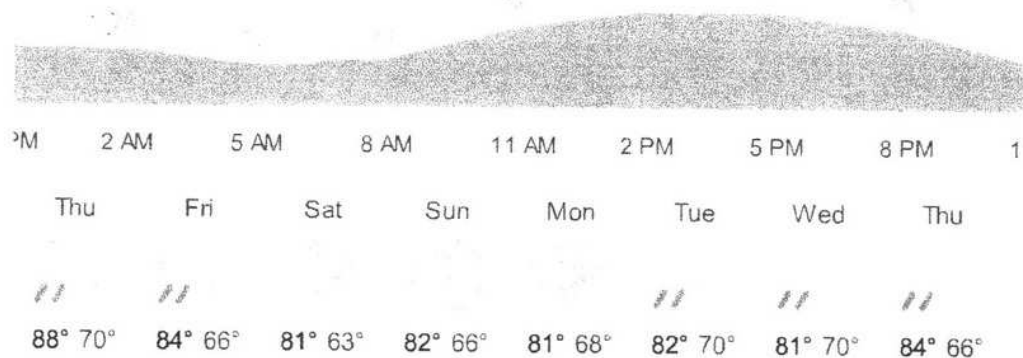
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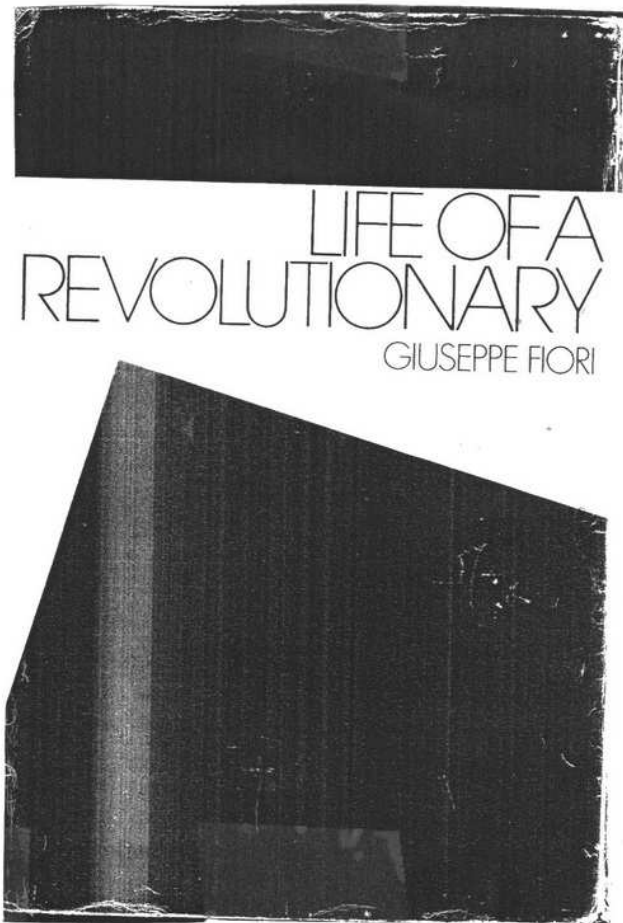
Friday
Chance of Storm

84 °F | °C

Precipitation: 20%
Humidity: 47%
Wind: 10 mph

Temperature Precipitation Wind





ANTONIO GRAMSCI
LIFE OF A REVOLUTIONARY

GIUSEPPE FIORI

Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), son of a poor Sardinian family, became the leader and theorist of the Italian Communist Party in his early thirties. Arrested by Mussolini's police in 1927, he was imprisoned in a fascist jail until his death.

Gramsci was perhaps the most important Marxist thinker to emerge in a Western European country in this century and his influence is now world wide. His life is also an exemplary lesson of what it means to live, and die, a revolutionary. Giuseppe Fiori's biography is a moving personal account of Gramsci as a man, seen both through the eyes of those who remember him and close up in his own writing to relatives and friends. With great sensitivity, Fiori relates Gramsci's private feelings and experiences to his growth as a political leader and thinker. Gramsci's intellectual importance has increased with every year since the posthumous publication of his Prison Notebooks in the late forties. This first comprehensive biography sets his life in its historical context and establishes his full stature.



GIUSEPPE FIORI was born at Silanus in Sardinia in 1923. He took a law degree at the University of Cagliari and subsequently worked there as a radio journalist. For a number of years he was the cinema critic of the chief Cagliari daily and also traveled widely in Europe as a correspondent and reporter. He has written for many Italian newspapers, including *Il Ponte*, *L'Espresso* and *Il Mondo*, and has published two documentary novels about life in Sardinia. More recently he has published a very successful study of contemporary Sardinian banditry, *La Società del Malessere* (1968).

Bibliography

The Works of Gramsci

The Letters

A first collection of 218 of the prison letters was published by Giulio Einaudi (Turin) in 1947. Not all the letters were complete. Cuts had been made for three sorts of reasons: (1) the letters from Ustica had been cut to conceal the friendly personal relationship between Bordiga and Gramsci, for political reasons; (2) certain references to other members of Gramsci's family had been omitted, to avoid offending the living members of the family; (3) an attempt was made to reduce each letter to its essential points, and exclude matters of marginal interest. In spite of these cuts, and the incompleteness of the edition, it presented a clear enough intellectual and moral portrait of Gramsci and it is still worth reading today by anyone looking for an outline sketch of his personality. (An excellent English translation of this edition of the *Lettere* was made by Hamish Henderson of Edinburgh University not long after it appeared: in the twenty intervening years, it has never found an English or American publisher.)

A selection from these letters was published by Editori Riuniti (Rome) in 1961, prefaced by the outstanding lecture given by Luigi Russo at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa on 27 April 1947, the tenth anniversary of Gramsci's death.

Other letters continued to appear, as they were found or released by members of the family and other correspondents, and published by various newspapers or reviews. Giansiro Ferrata and Niccolò Gallo collected these together with some from the original Einaudi edition and others hitherto unpublished, in the second volume of *2000 pagine di Gramsci* (Il Saggiatore, Milan 1964). This volume contains 64 letters of the period 1912–26 and 268 prison letters; the notes are useful. Also extremely important is the collection of letters exchanged by Gramsci and other future PCI leaders before Bordiga's displacement in 1923–24, published in 1962 as *La Formazione del Gruppo Dirigente del PCI* (Editore Riuniti, Rome).

Finally a complete collection of the prison letters was published by Einaudi in 1965: (*Lettere dal carcere*, ed. Caprioglio and Fubini, NEU Giulio Einaudi, Turin). This contains 428 letters, mostly checked against the originals. The editors have included information on Gramsci's various correspondents (though the data on the Schucht family are not entirely correct) and a very

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precise chronology of Gramsci's life. There is also an index of all the books and periodicals referred to in the letters. The notes are excellent, and contain much new and original information relating to Gramsci's life.

The rest of Gramsci's writings can be divided under two headings: articles and essays published in various newspapers and reviews between 1914 and 1926; and the Prison Notebooks, the *Quaderni del carcere*.

Writings of the period 1914–26

Einaudi has published so far the articles from *Il Grido del popolo*, *La Città futura* and *Avanti!* (1914–18) in a volume entitled *Scritti giovanili* ('Early Writings') 1958. A selection from *Sotto la Mole*, Gramsci's daily rubric in *Avanti!*, appeared under the same title in 1960. His articles from the weekly *L'Ordine Nuovo* were published in *L'Ordine Nuovo 1919–20* (1954). In 1963 Einaudi also published an *Ordine Nuovo* anthology, edited with an excellent introductory essay by Paolo Spriano (reprinted by Editori Riuniti in 1965 under the title *Gramsci e L'Ordine Nuovo*). Additional articles from the period 1915–21 were collected by Sergio Caprioglio in a special issue of the review *Il Corpo* in 1968. Gramsci's articles from *L'Ordine Nuovo*, 1921–2 were published by Einaudi in 1966. Some writings of the period before Gramsci's arrest appear in *2000 pagine di Gramsci* mentioned above. In this Ferrata and Gallo have included, as well as selections from writings previously published by Einaudi, articles of the period 1921–26 drawn from both the daily and the fortnightly *L'Ordine Nuovo*, from *Stato Operaio* and from *L'Unità*. Their anthology also contained Gramsci's speech in parliament of 16 May 1925, the letter to the Soviet Communist Party leadership of October 1926, and the uncompleted essay *Alcuni temi della questione meridionale* ('Some aspects of the Southern Question'), first published in Paris in 1930, in *Stato Operaio*. *2000 pagine di Gramsci* has a very lucid introduction by Ferrata, and good prefatory notes to each section of the anthology.

Elsa Fubini is currently preparing editions of the writings of the periods 1921–22 and 1923–26, for Einaudi.

Some articles from *L'Ordine Nuovo* were published by *New Left Review*, no. 51, London 1968, under the title 'Antonio Gramsci: Soviets in Italy'.

The Prison Notebooks

The 2,848 pages of the thirty-two prison notebooks constitute the great heritage Gramsci bequeathed to future generations. Felice Platone, the first editor of the notebooks, wrote: 'The 2,848 pages of the original correspond to about 4,000 type-written sheets. As soon as she came into possession of the notebooks, Tatiana Schucht numbered them by sticking a label on the front and back covers of each one, but paid no heed to the order in which they had

been written (thus, the first notebook, dated 8 February 1929, bears the number 16). One of the notebooks was given the number 'III' by Gramsci himself and entitled *La Filosofia di Benedetto Croce*; it was not numbered along with the others; we do not know why. Twenty-one notebooks were written (or at least started) at Turi prison, near Bari, and bear the prison stamp on each page; each page is also numbered by the prison authorities and the cover and inside front page carry written statements to the effect that 'This notebook contains pages numbered from 1 to . . . belonging to prisoner No. 7047 Gramsci Antonio'. Sometimes this statement is paraphrased into the formula 'No. 7047 pages . . .', and followed by the governor's signature. The eleven other notebooks, numbered as 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 17, 31, 23, 25 and 27, bear no official stamp or other prison marking; they must therefore have been composed during the years 1934-35, after Gramsci's transference to the clinic at Formia. In 1935, Gramsci's work was broken off for good: his lucidity and intellectual vigour remained unimpaired, according to those who visited him in the last months of his life, but his physical energy was exhausted.

The dating of the notebooks themselves presents considerable problems. Einaudi published them in six volumes, in the following order: *Il Materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce* ('Historical Materialism and the Philosophy of Benedetto Croce'), 1948; *Gli Intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura* ('The Intellectuals and the Organization of Culture'), 1949; *Il Risorgimento*, 1949; *Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica e sullo Stato moderno* ('Notes on Machiavelli, on Politics and on the Modern State'), 1949; *Letteratura e vita nazionale* ('Literature and National Life'), 1950, containing in addition Gramsci's theatre criticism of the period 1916-20 from *Avanti!*; and lastly, *Passato e presente* ('Past and Present'), 1951, which has a useful subject-index to all six volumes. An anthology of Gramsci's writings was published by Editori Riuniti in 1963, edited by Carlo Salinari and Mario Spinella. The same publisher brought out another selection edited by Mario Spinella in 1964, with the title *Elementi di Politica* ('Elements of Politics'). An English translation of the selected writings of Gramsci was published by Lawrence & Wishart (London 1957) under the title *The Modern Prince* (selection and translation by Louis Marks). The same publisher will shortly bring out a much more comprehensive selection of Gramsci's writings, translated and introduced by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (Spring 1970). One of Gramsci's writings on education - 'In Search of Education', translated with an introduction by Quintin Hoare, was published in *New Left Review*, no. 32, 1965. *The Open Marxism of Antonio Gramsci* (Cameron Associates, New York 1957) is a short selection from *Il Materialismo storico*, translated and annotated by Carlo Marzoni, relating Gramsci to 'American problems'.

Works on Gramsci's Life and Thought

Critical Studies

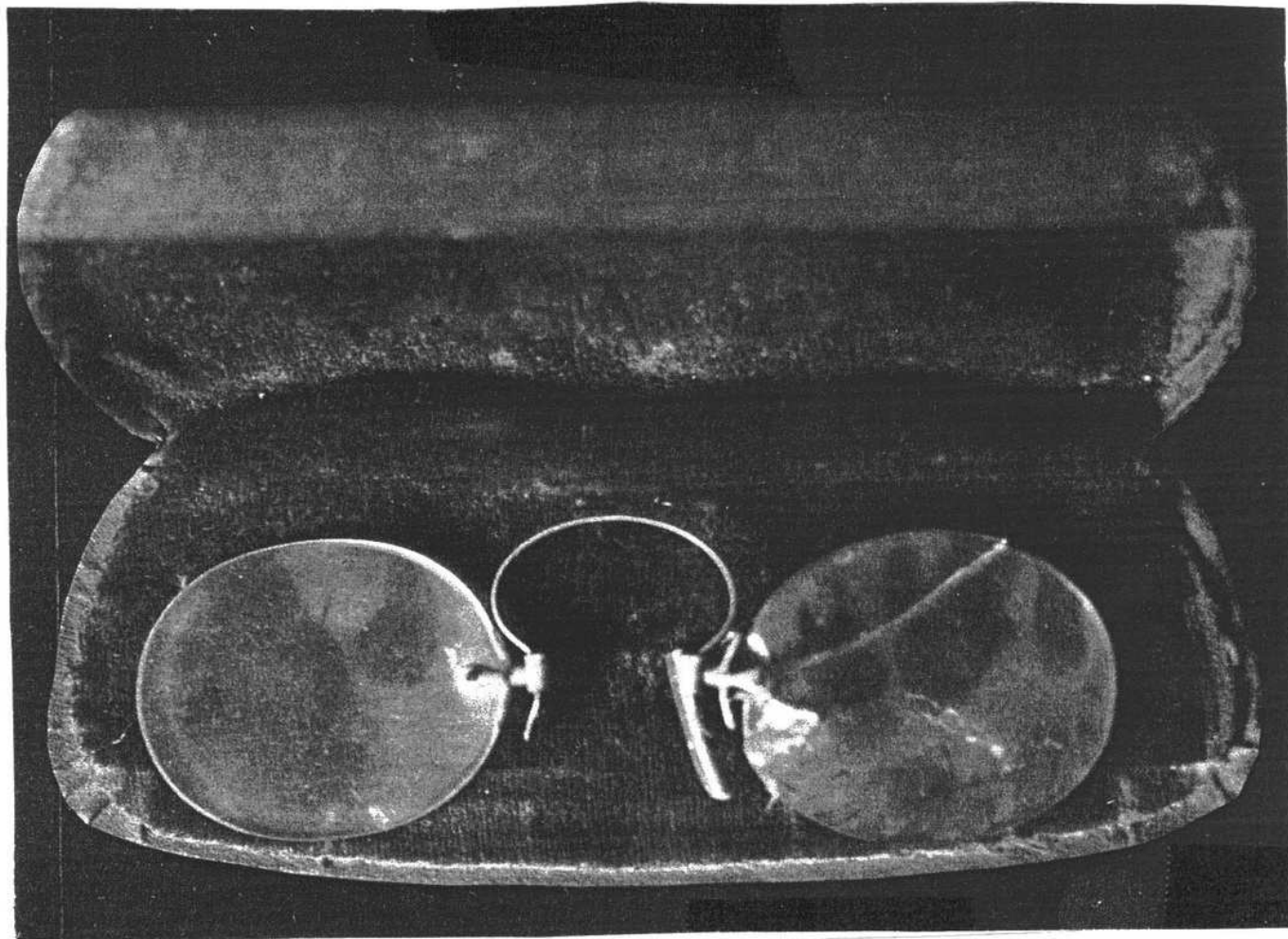
There is a vast critical literature on Gramsci's thought, and (as yet) no adequate general bibliography. In the absence of this, it is however worth mentioning the following: Nicola Matteucci, *Antonio Gramsci e la filosofia della prassi* ('Antonio Gramsci and Marxism'), Giuffrè, Milan 1951; Carlo Leopoldo Ottino, *Concetti fondamentali nella teoria politica di Antonio Gramsci* ('Basic Concepts of Gramsci's Political Theory'), Feltrinelli, Milan 1956; the two volumes of essays entitled *Studi Gramsciani*, Rome 1958, and *La Città Futura*, Milan 1959; Giuseppe Tamburrano, *Antonio Gramsci: La vita, il pensiero, l'azione* ('Antonio Gramsci: His Life Thought, and Action') Lacaita, Manduria 1963; Silverio Corvisieri, *Trotsky e il comunismo italiano* (Samonà & Savelli, 1969). Useful articles on Gramsci are those in *La Rivista storica del socialismo* (nos. 17-31, Milan) from a more pro-Bordiga position; and the special number of the PCI review *Critica marxista* (Rome, 'Quaderni', no. 3, 1967), entitled *Prassi rivoluzionaria e storicismo in Gramsci*.

In English, specially worthy of note are John M. Cammett, *Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism* (Stanford University Press, 1967), and John Merrington's 'Theory and Practice in Gramsci's Marxism' (*The Socialist Register*, London and New York 1969).

Biographies

The first attempt at a biography was by Lucio Lombardo-Radice and Giuseppe Carbone, who published their *Vita di Antonio Gramsci* in 1952 (Edizioni di Cultura Sociale, Rome). Later research showed up the limitations of this work - admitted in any case by the authors in their own preface. Giuseppe Tamburrano's *Antonio Gramsci: La vita, il pensiero, l'azione*, mentioned in the above section, contains a somewhat schematic biographical outline, and some of his judgements have provoked much dissent and controversy. Salvatore Francesco Romano's large study *Antonio Gramsci* (Einaudi, Turin 1967) contains no new material, but the chapters on the Turin years are exhaustive. Two outstanding studies on different periods of Gramsci's life have been made by Domenico Zucaro: 'Antonio Gramsci all'Università di Torino 1911-15', in the review *Società*, December 1957; and *Vita del Carcere di Antonio Gramsci* (Edizioni Avanti!, Milan-Rome, 1954). Both essays contain much original and useful information. Most valuable for understanding the background of Gramsci's political life are the two volumes which have so far appeared of Paolo Spriano's *Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano* (Einaudi): volume I 'From Bordiga to Gramsci'

(1967), and volume II 'The Years of Clandestinity' (1969). There is also a useful collection of documents on the early history of the PCI, *I primi dieci anni di vita del PCI* (Feltrinelli, Milan 1962), with an introduction by G. Berti.



Antonio Gramsci's eyeglasses, photography by Mario Dondero.



Resident Mr. Perez explains to the Ambassador his "Resident Initiative"

"INVENTING MY OWN TERMS"

A LETTER FROM THOMAS HIRSCHHORN TO ELIZABETH

STATEMENTS AND LETTERS

STATEMENTS AND LETTERS

LETTER TO ELIZABETH (INVENTING MY OWN TERMS)

Dear Elizabeth,²⁶

I really think your question is pertinent: How does art shed light on philosophy, and, conversely, how does philosophy shed light on art practice? Do the two disciplines speak in parallel and never touch, or are there points of intersection where each can illuminate, provide models for, and critique the other? Yes, my answer is yes! through "Friendship" and by "Inventing my own terms."

Friendship between Art and Philosophy

My first response is: Friendship! Friendship between Art and Philosophy! Together with my friend Marcus Steinweg, a philosopher, we made a map: the "Map of Friendship between Art and Philosophy." With this map we wanted to make a visual statement of this friendship and work out, give form to, and assert why Art and Philosophy are linked together: Art and Philosophy are linked by a shared admiration and passion, not by influence, discussion, illustration, explication, or justification, not by these static and hostile terms from which one cannot build a friendship. Friendship is, or can be, built from shared admiration for somebody and passion for something. Friendship between Art and Philosophy does not mean that the artist needs the philosopher in order to do his own work, nor that the philosopher needs the artist to do his work, but it means that Philosophy and Art really share the same movement, the same dynamic, the same interrogations, the same problematic, the same headlessness, in order to accomplish the constitutive creative artistic act. This artistic act is the assertion of a new truth. In Philosophy this truth is a new concept, and in Art this truth is a new form.

Inventing My Own Terms

Terms and notions are important, both in Philosophy and in Art. I completely agree with you when you point out that Philosophy provides a popular source

of quotation and reference for artists, curators, historians, and theorists writing about art. But my response is: I want to invent my own terms in Art! Philosophers use words with precision and exactitude. Following their logic, philosophers are sculpting concepts in the strongest way they can. The words they use are powerful and important tools in order to create new terms in Philosophy. Philosophers are inventing their own terms. I—as an artist—admire that enormously. I can learn from Philosophy and from philosophers and try to use my own terms as well in relation to Art, in relation to my work and to myself as an artist. When people speak of "community art," "relational aesthetics," "engaged art," "political art," "participatory art," "educational art," these terms, all of them really, make no sense. But—as an artist—I have the possibility to invent my own terms, my own terms in Art.

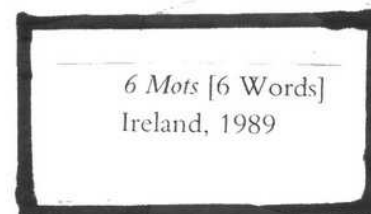
In the "Map of Friendship between Art and Philosophy" there are ten terms Marcus and I worked out together. The Friendship between Art and Philosophy means the total sharing of these ten terms, in what we call "unshared responsibility." "Unshared responsibility" is the adequate term for our relationship, both in work and in friendship. "Unshared responsibility" means that each of us takes on—each one on his own—the entire responsibility for the work done. I take entire responsibility for the work contributed by Marcus, and Marcus takes entire responsibility for the work contributed by me—this is friendship. Each one—without sharing—is entirely responsible for the work of the other. There is no sharing of responsibility. There is a "nonsharing" and there is responsibility. This implies confidence and generosity. This means agreeing completely with the other. This means agreeing completely with the production of the other. I agree with Marcus's production—completely—and Marcus agrees with my production—completely. Agreeing does not mean approving, but agreeing means being responsible for—being responsible for something you are not responsible for. This is what goes beyond criticism and negativity. This is movement and belief. Beyond anything, in order to agree, I need, and Marcus needs, to be sovereign. There is no space, no will, and no temptation to neutralize the other. This is friendship. This is working in friendship. Therefore, the ten terms of our map are equally important to both of us;

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"Work"



"Engagement"

there aren't five terms for Philosophy and five for Art. All terms are essential terms for Marcus as a philosopher as well as for me as an artist. To share this makes me happy; this is friendship and we materialized it—together—in our "Map of Friendship between Art and Philosophy." To answer your question as the artist, I will follow these ten terms, and remain faithful to our ten Friendship-terms: 1. Love, 2. Assertion, 3. Headlessness, 4. Form, 5. Autonomy, 6. Universality, 7. War, 8. Courage, 9. Hope, and 10. Resistance.

1. Love

I love Philosophy and I love Spinoza, I love Gramsci, I love Foucault, I love Bataille, I love Deleuze, I love Nietzsche, I love Badiou, I love Sartre, I love Arendt. I need Philosophy for my life, to try to find answers to big questions such as "love," to name one of the most important ones. And for this, I need Philosophy—please believe it! I am passionate about Spinoza because reading his *Ethics* had a real impact on me. I am passionate about Philosophy in general because I enjoy not understanding everything. I like the fact that in Philosophy things remain to be understood and work still needs to be done. I—as an artist—admire how great philosophers are interested in and committed to other thinkers and how these philosophers are the most able to explain with their own words the concepts of other philosophers. Gilles Deleuze is truly an important philosopher to me; he's really the one who convinced me to start reading Spinoza. You have to know, Elizabeth, I am not a reader and I don't pretend to be one. *Ethics* is overwhelming in form, logic, and clarity. *Ethics* is a powerful attempt to fight obscurantism and idealism, and today, more than ever, we need to confront this. Reading Spinoza means insisting on receptivity and sensuality without the idea of a certain type of infinity. Spinoza presents a concept devoid of transcendence and devoid of immanence. It is the concept—as Deleuze shows—of Here and Now, the concept of Life—Life as a subject without God. An active subject, a subject of pleasure and leisure. A responsible, gay, happy, assertive subject. To do artwork is only possible with love. I love Mondrian, I love Nolde, I love Schwitters, I love Beuys, I love Warhol, I love Duchamp, I love Malevich, I love Oppenheim.

want to rush through the wall head-first; I want to make a breakthrough; I want to cut a hole, or a window, into the reality of today.

4. Form

The essential question in Art is the question of form. How can I give a form that creates a truth? How can I give a form—today, in my historical field—which creates, beyond historical facts and beyond the actuality of today, a universal truth? These are the essential questions to me as an artist. I don't conceive my work as an outcome of philosophers' concepts or of theory. I am not illustrating Philosophy with my work. I am not reading Philosophy to do my artwork and I am not reading Philosophy to justify my work.

It is crucial not to forget that an artwork can be something that does not function. (I do not say that Art has no function, but Art does not have to function!) Today the question of functioning ("Does it function? Does it work? Is it—then—a success or not?") arises automatically and quickly as the criteria for "good" or "bad" art. This is stupid and easy.

Art is something which reaches us beyond such criteria. To believe in this power of Art is to me what "working politically" as an artist means: trying to resist, in and with the work, the pressure of functionality. I am often surprised by effortless, inexact, and empty terms or notions used in order to "explain" an artwork. I have to invent my own terms and I want to insist with my own notions. I know—as an artist—that to give form is the absolute necessity.

5. Autonomy

Art is autonomous, Art is autonomous because—and just because—it's Art. Another word for autonomy is "beauty" or "the absolute." To make it clear, I am not interested in "autonomy" as self-sufficiency or self-enclosure. I am for autonomy as a self-erection or self-expenditure. There is a difference between self-expenditure, being cruel vis-à-vis my own work, not-economizing myself, and what is called "self-cancellation" and "auto-destruction." I want to undermine myself—my person—in doing my work; I do not want to undermine my work! I don't want to take myself seriously in doing my work but I want

2. Assertion

In Art the assertion of form is essential. Only when I assert a form—even if it is against everyone and everything—am I constituting a work of art. A work of art is always an assertion, and as an assertion it is a gift. A challenging and unexpected gift. A gift which—by its generosity—blows off any thoughts of calculation and economization. I want to give everything; I want to understand the form of my work as a gift. But the gift is not the work itself—the gift is the act of doing it and doing it that way! What I love about the notion of "the gift" is its offensive, demanding, and even aggressive part, the part that provokes the other to give more! It's the part which implies a response, a real and active response to the gift. The gift—or work—must be a challenge: this is why "auto-destruction" is unthinkable. To me, "self-cancellation" is connected to narcissism, to tearfulness. Those terms are not related to my understanding of Art as an assertion, an absolute assertion of form, as an engagement, as a commitment to pay the price, as a mission, as a never-ending conflict, as a strength, and as a position. In my work I assert forms that cannot be asserted, and this is—really—the assertion; this is the gift.

3. Headlessness

The term "headless" is also completely shared by Art and Philosophy. "Headless" does not mean stupid, silly, or without intelligence; "headless" does not mean being ignorant. I am not an ignorant artist—better not be ignorant, as an artist! Of course, I love the beautiful book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* by Jacques Rancière and its fantastic, enlightening title, but I am not a schoolmaster—I don't even teach Art—I am an artist! I am and want to be a headless artist. I want to act—always—in headlessness; it's something important to me. I want to make Art in headlessness. "Headlessness" stands for doing my work in a rush and precipitously. Other words for headlessness are restlessness, insisting and insisting again heavily, acceleration, generosity, expenditure, energy (Energy = Yes! Quality = No!), self-transgression, blindness, and excess. I never want to economize myself and I know that—as the artist—I sometimes look stupid facing my own work, but I have to stand for this ridiculousness. I

to do and take my work seriously! I believe in the autonomy of my artwork, I believe, I think, I know that the autonomous in an artwork is something that only can occur through grace. As an artist, I know that I have to be touched by grace. I have to be open—and I have to make an open and confident work—in order to be touched by grace!

6. Universality

Universality is constitutive of Art. It's something very important to me. One can say that Art is universal because it's Art. If it is not universal it is not Art, it's something else. I do oppose the term "universality" to culture, tradition, identity, community, religion, obscurantism, globalization, internationalism, nationalism, and regionalism. With my artwork—and not only with my works in public space—I experienced that universality is truly essential. There are other words for universality: the Real, the One World, the Other, Justice, Politics, Aesthetics, Truth, the "Non-exclusive audience," and Equality. I believe—yes, believe!—in equality. To me, equality is not a theory; it has to be achieved again and again, every day and with each artwork. I believe that Art has the power of transformation. The power to transform each human being, each one, and equally without distinction. Yes—equality is the foundation and the condition of Art.

7. War

As an artist, I need to be a warrior. To be a warrior means to fight for something, not against something or somebody. I want to fight for my form. I want to develop it, I want to propose it, and I want to defend it. It's war, but it's not war against something or against somebody—it's war for something and war for somebody. To be a warrior means not to complain if my form is not taken seriously or if it is criticized. To be a warrior means to be aware of all the obstacles that need to be overcome in order to assert my form. To be a warrior means to never complain about ignorance or adversity. It means to fight, to work, and to keep faith in my mission. To be a warrior means to be someone who has a mission, someone who wants something, who has pleasure and fun,

who has the power and the energy to accomplish a mission. Perhaps an impossible mission—never mind—but the important thing is the mission. Each artwork is impossible. It is impossible because it's not necessary to do a possible artwork! An artwork is an impossible form and an impossible assertion and it's impossible to defend. To me, doing an artwork is not "impossible but necessary" but "impossible and necessary." An artwork must possess both "impossibility and necessity." Don't they together make sense? Don't they together create density, charge, and energy? Don't "impossibility and necessity"—together—give beauty? A warrior—beyond impossibility—never gives up the search for beauty; that's why a real warrior has the advantage—already—to be fighting for something.

8. Courage

In Art and Philosophy I need the courage to stand alone, the courage to be isolated, to be lonely. I am aware that the words "lonely," "isolated," and "alone" can be interpreted as "romantic" or against "the collective," but that's not the point because I am not against the collective. I am interested in the hard core of a decided and assumed loneliness and an assumed personal position. There is one term that has been very important to me—for years—the term "precarity." My adherence to precarity comes from my life, from my experience, from what I love—from the precarious forms I love—and from what I understand of it. My adherence to this term does not come from books, philosophy, or theory. I am happy that philosophers and writers such as Judith Butler, Emmanuel Levinas, Hal Foster, and Manuel Joseph among many others, have developed and are developing thoughts about "precariousness," but I must tell you my involvement comes from myself; I learned it myself and there is not much more to learn. My tendency is even—I admit—to avoid going "deeper" because I need, yes I need, my own strange, wrong, headless, misunderstood, bad, stupid—but—my fucking own relation to preserve and develop. This is not against theory or a refusal of theory, absolutely not; this is being open to what comes from myself, to what comes only from my own:

I'm the only one to see it and to understand it like this, only I can do it, only I take it seriously, only I have the courage to give it a form.

9. Hope

I hope, I dream, I want to act, and I want things to change. That is why I read Philosophy. I am not interested in reading writers, philosophers, thinkers, as an artist. I am interested in them as a human being. I don't use their work for my work. I read it to try to stay alert, to keep my thoughts active. To read their writings keeps my brain working, that's why I do it. With his essay "La notion de dépense," Bataille opens a field of strength. Loss is not destruction, but loss is a form to impose, an economic balance based on human activity and not on capitalism. Bataille said there must be structure, there must be excess. Hope as a principle for taking action, for moving and going straight ahead. Hope does not mean "hopeful for something" or "hopefully something will happen." Hope means hope as real Hope. To breathe—every second—is the physical translation of the Hope I mean.

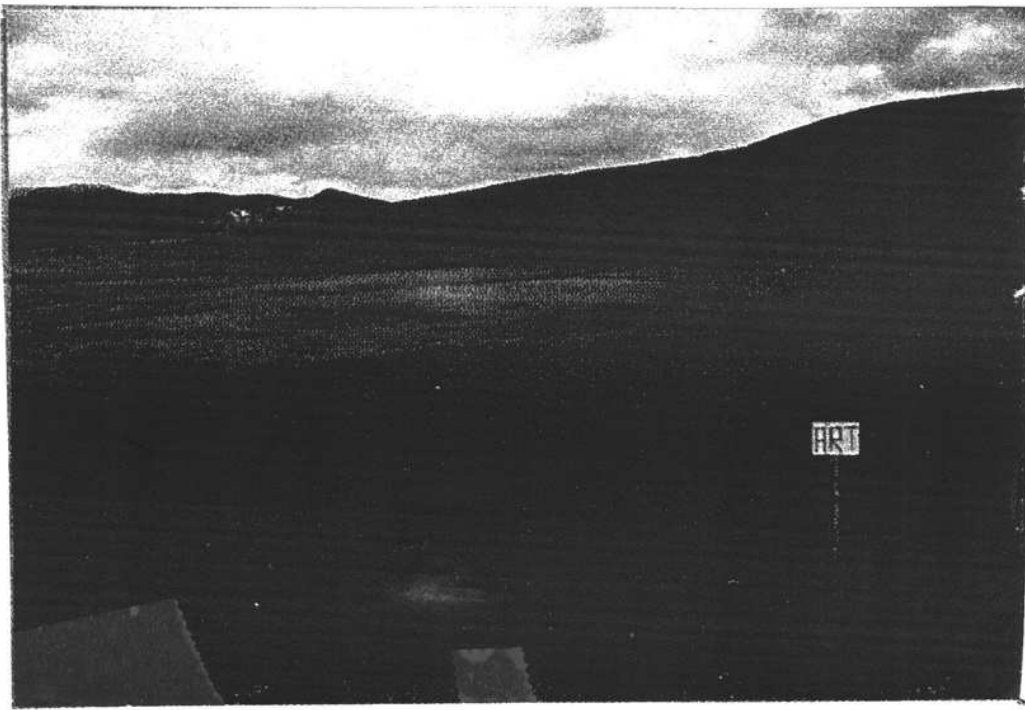
10. Resistance

Art is resistance, Art is resistance as such. Art—because it's Art—resists facts; Art resists aesthetic, cultural, political habits. Art—in its resistance—is movement, intensity, belief, positiveness. This I share with Marcus Steinweg. Pure philosophy is true, cruel, pitiless, philosophy that affirms, acts, creates. Philosophy is Art! The philosophy of Spinoza, of Nietzsche, of Deleuze, of Foucault is Art. I see the work of Foucault as Art—I see and can touch its resistance! It allows me to approach it, to seize it, to be active with it without understanding all of it. I don't have to be a historian, a connoisseur, or a specialist to confront works of art. I can seize the energy, the urgency, the necessity, the density of Michel Foucault's work—as of the work of other philosophers—it is charged. It's a battery. I can take this charged battery. It is pure energy, the energy of a singular commitment. It is the commitment to make a work of art. It is the affirmation that the work of art is philosophy and that philosophy is a work of art. I want to make a work, a work of art! I want to become what I am. I want

to become an artist! I want to appropriate what I am. I want to resist. This is my work as an artist.

December 1, 2010

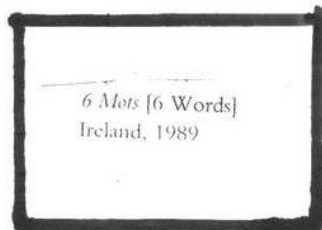
[Composed in English]



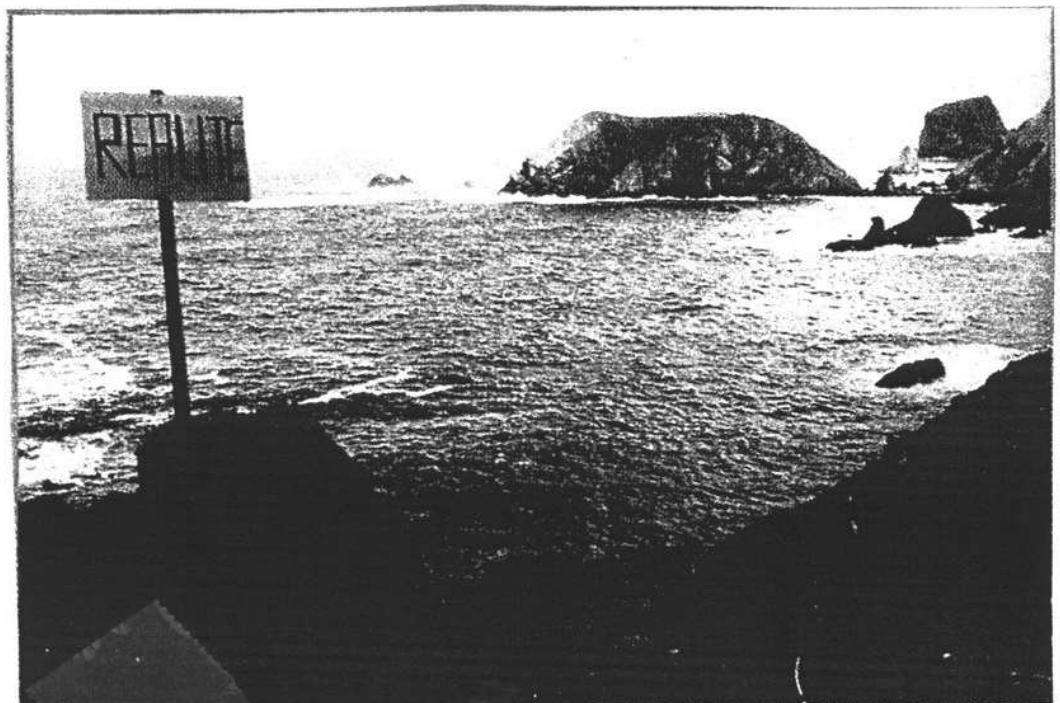
"Art"



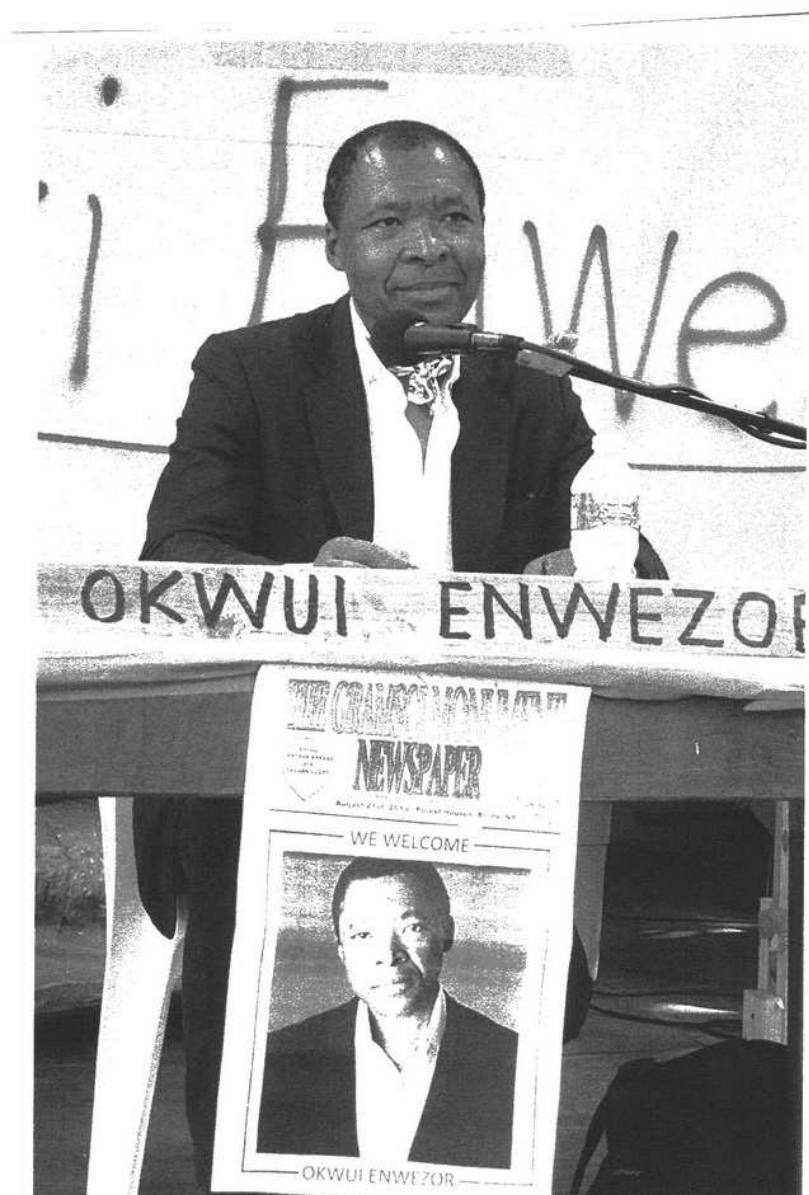
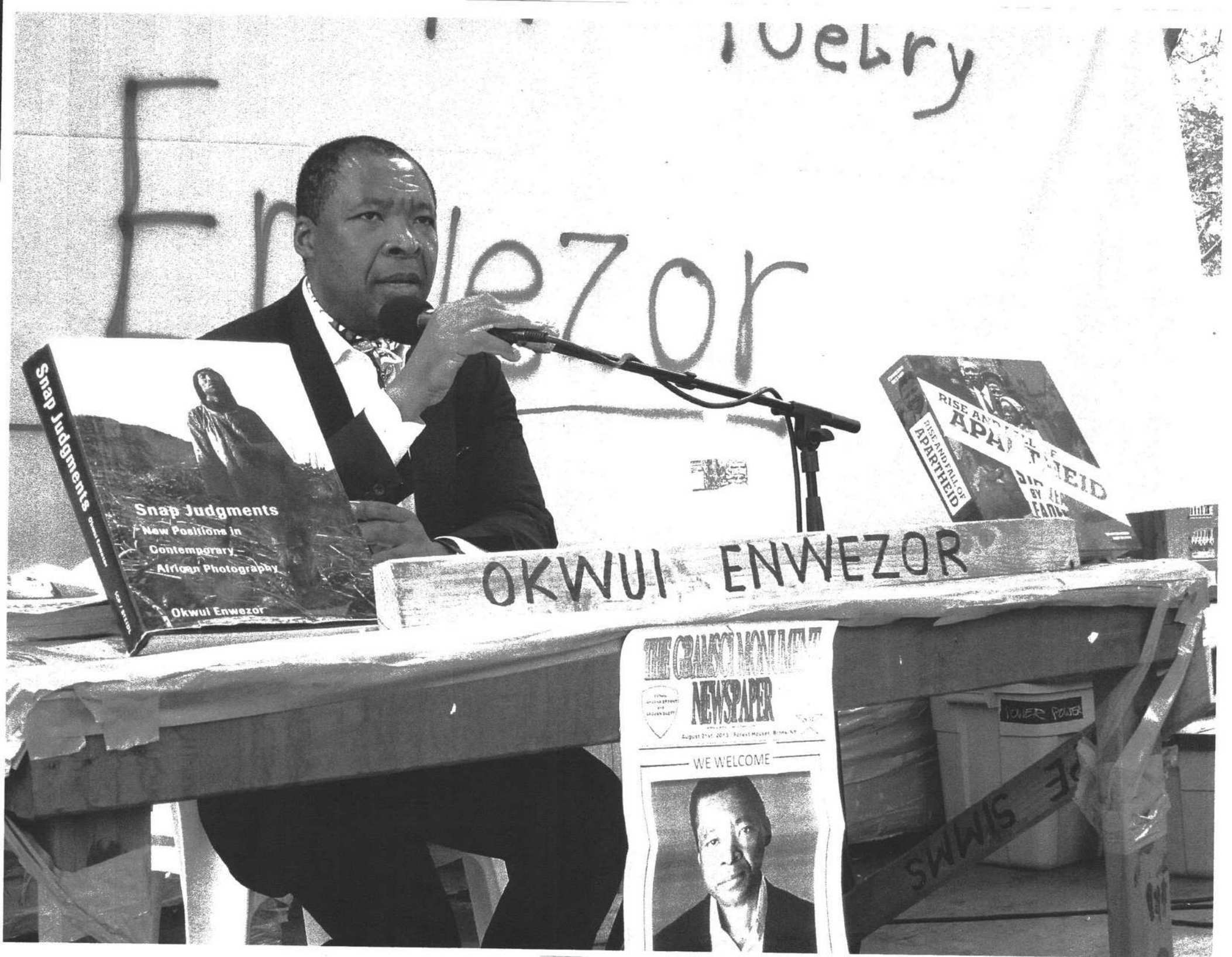
"Strategy"



"Power"



"Reality"



Okwui Enwezor during his poetry reading at the *Gramsci Monument*



A DAILY LECTURE WRITTEN BY MARCUS STEINWEG

54th Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 23rd August 2013
SELF-ACCELERATION
Marcus Steinweg

1. 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, and reflective self-securing.
2. Art and philosophy exist only as this breakthrough, as a force of surpassing and transgressing the horizon, which punctures the horizon of the possible through to the dimension of the impossible that is the dimension of truth.
3. Truth is not founded by philosophy and art.
4. Truth can only be asserted.
5. Truth cannot be grounded.
6. Truth eventuates when the subject alienates itself from the symbolic order, from its sociocultural integrity as well as phantasms of the imaginary.
7. There is truth at the moment when philosophy and art touch the impossible—pure virtuality, the real, or chaos—by risking a transgression of the horizon.¹
8. Philosophy and art are forms of realization of truths that do not preexist.
9. It cannot be a matter of finding truths; it is a matter of inventing them, of producing truth.
10. "'Truth' is never there of itself or in itself," and as such decipherable, "but contested and fought for," says Heidegger.²
11. Such a truth, insofar as it is the product of a contesting, struggling subject of assertion, is therefore not relative in the simple sense of the word.
12. Philosophy and art assert truth (art asserts truth by asserting a form) by withdrawing from the relativism of the truth of facts and the regime of proof and argumentative assurance.³
13. Philosophy and art do not assert any facts.
14. They constitute truths that corrupt the order of facts.
15. The locus of truth cannot be found within the universe of facts. That is the utopianism of truth, that it is as such deranged, somewhere else, that it bursts the register of facts, that it insists on another place not on the map of this topology.
- 16.

¹ On the "identification of truth with the real," see Alenka Zupancic, *The Shortest Shadow: Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), 92.
² Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides, Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 54 (Frankfurt am Main: V. Klostermann, 1992), 25.
³ "Relativism, no matter how progressive its bearing, has at all times been linked with moments of reaction, beginning with the sophists' availability to the more powerful interests" (Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. W. B. Ashton (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), 37).

WHAT'S GOING ON?

FEED BACK

malbork

Gramsci Monument, the Bronx



On Blogger since
January 2010

By Malbork



Thomas Hirschhorn created this giant, rambling structure called the Gramsci Monument in the middle of the Forest

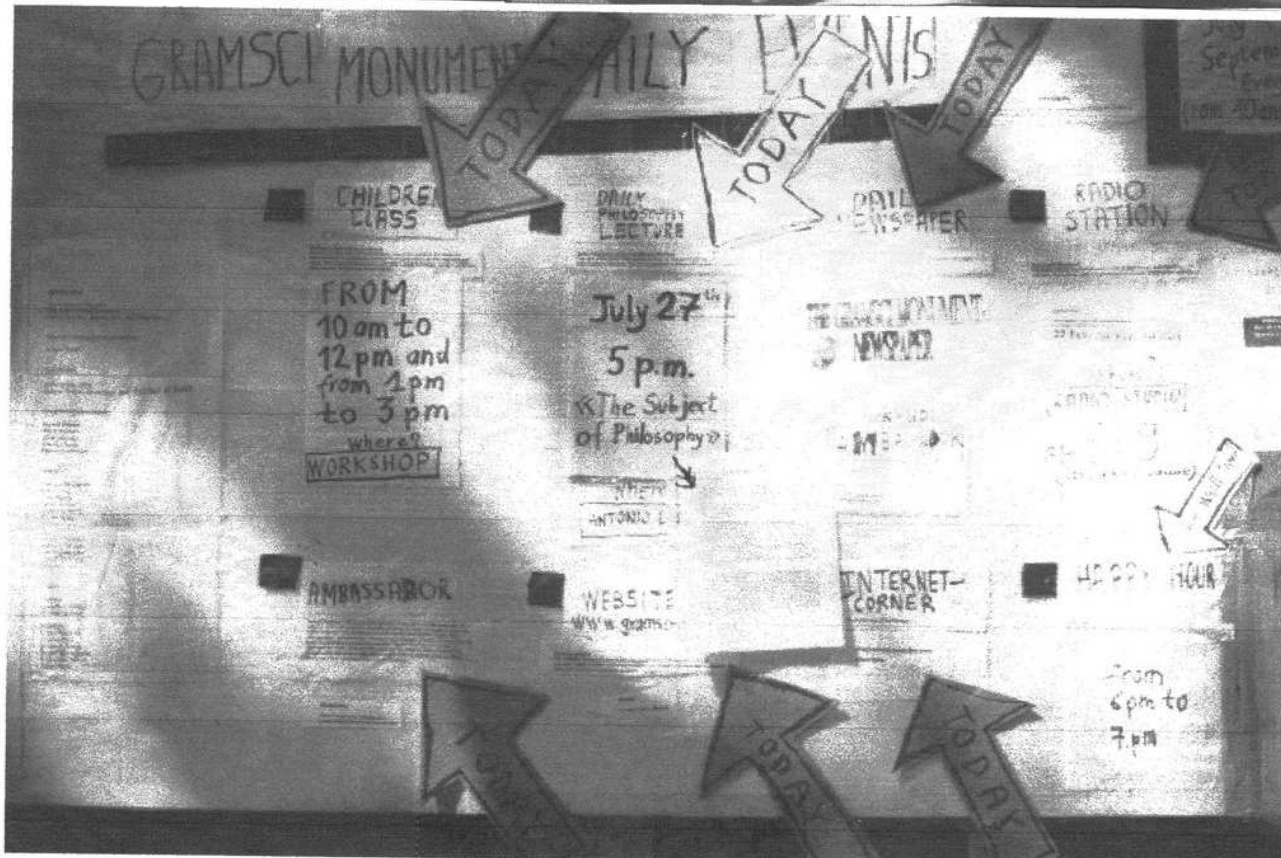


Houses project in the Bronx. He and Forest Houses residents built the monument out of plywood, packing tape, and plexiglass, among other cheap materials. It encompasses an art studio, a newspaper office, a radio station, a museum with objects from Gramsci's life (like the medicine he took in prison), a library, a restaurant, a wading pool, and a lecture area.

Hirschhorn's philosophy is all about "Energy," instead of "Quality." The consistency and scale of his poor, ugly materials and scrawly handwriting add up to something unified, with its own codes of beauty. You get the feeling that anyone who's persistent enough could make an art project out of anything. Which is a little sad, since most persistent people in the neighborhood can't very well pull themselves up by making massive art projects.

The monument is really exciting, since (on the day I visited) it felt like a free school, where you could get several year's worth of lectures and classes on philosophy and art if you came by every day. But at the same time the monument isn't trying to create real social change. Hirschhorn's contribution to the community involves hiring a lot of people to staff the project and making everything free. He seems devoted to the idea of bringing Gramsci's democratic ideas ("Every human being is an intellectual") to people who wouldn't otherwise have access to them. He states part of his mission is to "provoke encounters" and "think Gramsci today." But he's not concerned with making a revolution (Occupy this isn't, though it borrows Occupy's aesthetic language), so the artwork maintains its distance, and ends up feeling hopelessly elitist. This is really a problem considering that the most basic thing to know about Gramsci is that he thought the upper classes keep the lower classes down not just with money/violence/politics, but with culture, and the lower classes had to come up with their own culture and religion and meaning if they were going to manage to revolt and improve their situation.

The other two components of Hirschhorn's mission are purely self-serving, to "establish a new term of monument" and "create an event." I find this depressing: an artwork in dialogue with revolution, on scale with a revolutionary encampment or commune, even pretending at revolution, but not fundamentally interested in it. (I went to the panel with Tao Lin and Ryan McNamara at Bookcourt, McNamara talked about how, when he told his life story in a gallery setting, it didn't matter if he made it boring or interesting, since "you're not judging it for what it's worth, you're judging it as a project.") The two lectures I witnessed at the Gramsci Monument were hyper-intellectual and a bit dull--lecture as artwork, as a component of the art like packing tape. Not lecture as the people speaking to the people.



Marcus Steinweg gives a lecture every afternoon at 5pm. On July 27, his lecture was partially drowned out by the extremely amplified music of some Forest Houses residents who were having a barbecue. It was hard to tell if the music was a deliberate affront or not

WHAT'S GOING ON?

FEED BACK



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July/August 2013

Summer Art Space a Big Hit at Forest Houses

By Eric Deutsch

Maybe you want to dip your feet into a small wading pool. Or read a philosophy book while enjoying a gentle breeze. Or perhaps listen to a poetry reading on a couch in the shade. You can do all of this, and more, at the Gramsci Monument at Forest Houses. The large interactive art exhibit – built out of wood in a public space just for the summer – is drawing people not just from the Bronx development, but all over the world.



The Gramsci Monument at Forest Houses is open to the public all summer, and includes a wading pool, computer lab, art space, performance space and library.

The workers and volunteers at the construct are Forest Houses residents. This includes Harry Drake, the Resident Association Secretary, whose stage name is DJ Baby Dee – he serves as the emcee for performances, works in the radio station and reads daily announcements. "The project brought the community together; we've never seen anything like this before in NYCHA," Mr. Drake said. "It's like a burst of energy, 'Wow, it's art coming here!'"

The Gramsci Monument is the brainchild of Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn, and is paid for entirely by the Dia Art Foundation. Its name comes from the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci. An exhibit at the art space includes many of Antonio Gramsci's personal artifacts, including the utensils he used when he was in prison. And his books are included in the library, which is managed by resident Marcella Paradise. "This has brought a lot of enlightenment to me," said Ms. Paradise, who also was convinced to do a poetry reading one day. "I was nervous at first because I never had experienced that, but (Mr. Hirschhorn) brought a lot out of me."

In the computer room, which is the most popular spot in the exhibit, residents can use the internet and play video games. "It's a lot of fun," said seven-year-old Shamah Jeffrey. "I like playing basketball on the computer."

To make sure everything is kept safe, several residents work as security, including cousins Kareen and Ernestine Bethea, who also know CPR and first aid. "We're always

continued on page 2

the ones who are not in day camp," said Ernestine Bethea.

People have come to the Gramsci Monument from as far away as Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. And neighborhood day camps even schedule regular visits as part of their day, according to Resident Association President Eric Farmer. "The kids love this thing. We have to actually make them leave at night," he said.

The Gramsci Monument will be dismantled on September 15, by the same Forest Houses residents who built it earlier this year. "I am going to feel so sad when it closes," said Myrna Alvarez, who provides snacks at the art space. "I wish we could keep it forever; the community would get closer. It will stay in my heart and in my mind."

Mr. Hirschhorn updates the Gramsci Monument's website every day at www.gramsci-monument.com

RESIDENT OF THE DAY



ROSA VELEZ