

Dear Philippe,

I hope you are doing well and hope very much that your new mission in New York is enlightening.

I am writing to solicit a meeting with you in New York in order to present you my "Gramsci Monument" in its very first developments, which I plan to locate it in New York.

- Within my series of monuments, three have been completed until now. The "Gramsci Monument" always planned in my mind will be the fourth one and the last one. You might have seen the "Bataille Monument" (Kassel, 2002), but before that I did the "Deleuze Monument" (Avignon, 2000) and the "Spinoza Monument" (Amsterdam, 1999).

- Since the "Bataille Monument" I developed the 'Presence' and 'Production' guidelines, which are my definitions for doing a work in public space today. Following these guidelines, I accomplished the "Musée Précaire Albinet" (Aubervilliers, 2004) and this year "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" (Amsterdam). Beside these two large projects in public space, there are two other 'Presence' and 'Production'-works: "24h Foucault" (Paris, 2004) and "Swiss Swiss Democracy (Paris, 2004/2005), which I made according to my guidelines even though these two works were located in an institution (and not in public space).

- The idea of doing the "Gramsci Monument" in New York is a project I've had since months - even years. When staying in New York I travelled several times throughout the city in order to look and spot possible locations, I visited Harlem, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. Last year, invited by Charity Scribner, professor at the La Guardia Community College (Queens) and MIT (that I met at Documenta 11 as she was the 'platform' organizer), I visited Queens with a more specific focus to find out about possibilities of developing such a work in that area. I was told - as by amazing chance - that Queens hosts one of the largest archives of Antonio Gramsci within the US.

- To be able to build up and materialize such a challenging and ambitious work as the "Gramsci Monument" and in order to give it the dimension that such an experience deserves, I need a very well established New York producer and transmitter such as Dia Art Foundation. That is the reason why I ask you, Philippe: could you imagine such a collaboration/production/co-production?

Please let me know if it is possible and when we could meet in order to present and discuss with you my "Gramsci Monument". I will be in New York on the 24th and 25th of October, we could meet then - at your convenience - or later this year. I will also be in the US beginning next year (February) and even later.

Please tell me, take care - work hard,  
Thomas

P.S. I send you attached - for your information - an article that was published recently in "Texte zur Kunst" about "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival", 2009.

## PRESENCE AND PRODUCTION

The «Gramsci Monument» is a «Presence and Production» artwork. It is not a participative artwork. I believe that participation can not be provoked.(cf interview with Sebastian Egenhofer)

The «Gramsci Monument» is an art project based on the guideline of «Presence and Production». «Presence and Production» means: my (the artist) own presence and my (the artist) own production. I want to give «Presence and Production» in order to create the conditions for an implication of the public, I need to be myself first completely implicated, and I need to give my presence and my production, and also the «Presence and Production» of other contributors for The «Gramsci Monument». I believe with «Presence and Production» I can create moments of public space in the public space, but not only in the public space, also in an institution.

So far, I made five projects based on the guideline «Presence and Production»:

- 1- «Bataille Monument», Documenta 11, Kassel, 2002
- 2- «24h Foucault», Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2004
- 3- «Musée Précaire Albinet», Cité Albinet, Aubervilliers, 2004
- 4- «Swiss-Swiss Democracy», Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris, 2004
- 5- «The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival», Amsterdam, 2009

## «Gramsci Monument»

### Gramsci

Within my monument series (Spinoza, Deleuze, Bataille), Gramsci stands for his extraordinary work as thinker and his absolute engagement as a revolutionary. These two things put together make his position unique among other philosophers. The dynamics of his theories confront directly and immediately his practical engagement as an enlightened citizen. Through the life of Gramsci, an entire social climate of a passed epoch will be re-actualized and re-considered in a different light. Gramsci's work invites people to think beyond the simplistic oppositions of domination and resistance.

### About "The Other"

The question of public, the question of public space, the question of "The Other", the question of a 'non-exclusive audience' are – more than ever – set forth. «Gramsci Monument» is the affirmation that Art must be a tool to create this public space. «Gramsci Monument » addresses "The Other". The form of this artwork will enable "The Other" to be included, the form does not want to exclude anyone, that is its will, its break-through, its destiny and its grace.

### Coexistence and Co-operation

This project can only be done in Coexistence. Coexistence with the inhabitants of the borough of New York. Coexistence because it is their place, coexistence because it is with them, it is resolutely with and for the New York inhabitants. It is with and for the local inhabitants first – without exclusion of others.

But it is my work. It is me – the artist – who assumes fully the responsibility, who takes the responsibility for this work, for the entire work, in all of its aspects. The work must consequently be made in co-operation. «Gramsci Monument» cannot be done without the help of the inhabitants. This work cannot be done without the help of the inhabitants because it is not me – the artist – who claims to be helping, who wants to 'help' or furthermore who 'knows' how to help – on the contrary – the inhabitants are the ones helping the work. The inhabitants are the ones who are helping «Gramsci Monument» to be carried out to completion.

### Precariousness

«Gramsci Monument» is a project which is limited in time – for a duration of two months. Precariousness is the dynamics, the emergency, the necessity of this work. All instants are important for the duration of «Gramsci Monument», all instants are a unique instant, all instants are equal in their capacity to reach out. This is how «Gramsci Monument» claims to be universal. This work is not 'site-specific' – this work wants to prove its universality as artwork in the New York borough, with its inhabitants. Precariousness is a means of asserting the importance of the moment and of the place, of asserting the Here and Now to touch eternity and universality.

### Beam

«Gramsci Monument» is conceived as a Beam of energy. A Beam – to both concentrate the energy and give multiple openings. Concentrate energy for Gramsci and create multiple energies to become public, to have an impact, to create the

public. The Beam – which materializes «Gramsci Monument» – consist of 16 elements, which I divide in two groups :

Presence

1. Gramsci-Theater
2. New-Child's Play
3. Daily-Newspaper
4. Daily-Lectures
5. Documentation
6. Running Events
7. Gramsci-Lectures
8. Daily-Open Microphone

Production

9. Bar/Food
10. Gramsci-Library
11. Internet-Corner
12. Exhibition
13. Sculpture
14. Workshop
15. Neighborhood-Center
16. Ambassador.

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