Hyundai Card

Hyundai Card is proud to sponsor Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965–2016 at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. This far-reaching and ambitious exhibition provides an unparalleled glimpse into the artist’s pioneering oeuvre throughout her career of more than fifty years.

Hyundai Card is committed to pursuing the kind of innovative philosophy that is epitomized by Adrian’s artistic practice. As Korea’s foremost issuer of credit cards, Hyundai Card seeks to identify important movements in our culture, society, and technology, and to engage with them as a way of enriching lives. Whether we’re hosting tomorrow’s cultural pioneers at our stages and art spaces; building libraries of design, travel, music, and cooking for our members; or designing credit cards and digital services that are as beautiful as they are functional, Hyundai Card’s most inventive endeavors all draw from the creative well that the arts provide.

As a ten-year sponsor of The Museum of Modern Art, Hyundai Card is delighted to make Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965–2016 possible.
Adrian Piper’s achievements are varied and countless—as well as being an accomplished artist, she is also a philosopher and a writer of consummate skill—and an expansive exhibition of her work has long been overdue. Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965–2016, an exhibition of unprecedented reach and depth, has been in the making for more than five years, and we are excited to be sharing with our public a body of work that is as relevant and critical today as it was when she began her career, in the 1960s.

From the beginning, Adrian’s work has tackled complex subjects with the utmost precision. As such, her voice has been critical to the success of this retrospective of her work. She has been a true partner and collaborator from its inception to the design of the installations at our institutions. She has graciously shared her archives, insight, and brilliance with us along the way, pushing us to rethink our institutional mantras while at the same time trusting us to realize her vision. We are immensely grateful for her continued support, without which neither our presentations nor this publication would have been possible. They are the product of a journey marked by lively dialogue and a tireless determination from everyone involved.

Adrian has also helped us to realize the beautiful and powerful traveling show Adrian Piper: Concepts and Intuitions, 1965–2016, which will be presented at the Hammer Museum and Haus der Kunst. These two representations of her work elaborate on Adrian’s profound body of work, and reflect on her undeniable mark in Europe and the United States.

At The Museum of Modern Art, the show is made possible by Hyundai Card, with essential support provided by The Modern Women’s Fund and Lannan Foundation, as well as The Friends of Education of The Museum of Modern Art, Marilyn and Larry Fields, Marieluise Hessel Artzt, and the MoMA Annual Exhibition Fund. We are deeply grateful to them all. The Hammer Museum wishes to thank Board Chair Marcy Carsey, Board President Michael Rubel, and the Hammer Board of Directors for their ongoing leadership and support. Haus der Kunst would like to thank its shareholders, Freestate of Bavaria, and the Gesellschaft der Freunde Haus der Kunst e.V., as well as its major supporter, the Alexander Tutsek Foundation.

With Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965–2016 and Adrian Piper: Concepts and Intuitions, 1965–2016, we hope to cement Adrian’s critical role in the history of the art of our times and to broaden our audience’s knowledge of her lasting contribution to the field. It has been a tremendous honor to work alongside her, with her team in Berlin, and with all our colleagues in New York, Los Angeles, and Munich. Thank you, Adrian.

Glenn D. Lowry, Director, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Ann Philbin, Director, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
Okwui Enwezor, Director, Haus der Kunst, Munich
ARTIST'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None of us realized what we were in for when we started. I certainly was not prepared for the curators' persuasive demonstration, at our first meeting four years ago, that they already knew more about my work than I did. And perhaps they were not prepared for me to show up at that meeting with the APRA Foundation Berlin's Exhibition and Loan Agreement in hand. Since then, working on this exhibition with the entire staff of The Museum of Modern Art has been the most profoundly fulfilling collaboration of my life. My gratitude to each and every member of the MoMA team, and my awe and respect for the level of quality, scholarship, and professionalism at which MoMA regularly operates, know no bounds.

The very first to whom I owe that debt of gratitude is MoMA's Prime Mover, Glenn Lowry (whom I have occasionally confused with God), without whose unstinting support this exhibition would not have occurred, and without whose creative contributions it would not have been what it is. Glenn's openness, his willingness to experiment, to ask questions and test boundaries, and to rethink settled expectations, procedures, and habits have been absolutely crucial to the new ground this historic retrospective breaks and the wide variety of entrenched assumptions it violates. Fellow artists, listen up: this man is not a suit.

The idea for the retrospective first took root in Connie Butler's resourceful and wide-ranging imagination, where it germinated quietly for several years. Connie's committed participation, experienced judgment and deft interventions in our extended planning process, from near and afar, created and reinforced the firm and stable foundation of curatorial integrity on which the final form of this exhibition is based. It was fertilized by David Platzker's careful and detailed research, and his conscientious organization of the resulting wealth of information. I thank him for suggesting Adrian Piper: A Reader as a companion volume to this catalogue; and the authors who contributed to that publication—Diarmuid Costello, Jörg Heiser, Kobena Mercer, Nizan Shaked, Vid Simoniti, and Elvan Zabunyan—for the refreshingly original and varied approaches to my work they have provided. Together with the curators' profoundly innovative essays in this catalogue, all of them undergird this retrospective with a strong, reliable, and veridically well-anchored intellectual framework of the highest quality. The retrospective blossomed into maturity under the judicious leadership of Christophe Cherix. His careful and considered curatorial decisions, wise guidance, and confident coordination of the entire undertaking from inception to completion; his reassuring presence, in the background as well as in the foreground; and his always steady hand on the wheel have steered this project with inimitable grace, skill, and sensitivity. Okwui Enwezor was unable to contribute an essay to this catalogue, for reasons beyond anyone's control. But his presence is felt in its very existence. I am immensely grateful to him for bringing my work to the attention of a larger public in documenta 11 and in the 56th Venice Biennale. At this level of artistic collaboration, it is extremely difficult to draw a line between artist and curator or artist and administrator. I can only think of all of these good people, with very great affection, as co-conspirators.

All good co-conspirators have a network of allies who provide the specialized knowledge, competence, and devotion to the job that ensures that the job gets done at a standard of performance of which everyone can be proud. From the beginning, Tessa Ferreyros has given enormous energy, skill, and devotion to gathering, collating, and systematizing all of the information we have needed at each stage of the process. She has been not only MoMA's representative to my team at APRA but also the medium through which virtually all communications between these two institutions have been transmitted or coordinated. I did not begin to really comprehend what was at stake in this exhibition until I encountered Mack Cole-Edelsack's brilliant, detailed architectural scale model representing the way my retrospective would look when installed in MoMA's Sixth Floor and Marron Atrium. The dexterity and resourcefulness with which he engineered the reconstruction of the space and the placement of work within it gave me a powerful sense of the full scale of the curators' achievement. It left me speechless. I am also deeply indebted to Josh Higgason for his masterful fabrication of a recent major work, Mauer, which will be seen at MoMA for the first time. Ramona Bronkar Bannayan, with the assistance of Jennifer Cohen, generously shared with me her wealth of experience in long-term planning and administering the logistics of what has been a particularly challenging and demanding show by every measure. Wendy Woon tolerated my inept incursions into her area of specialization—museum education—with great patience and good humor, and contributed liberally to my own continuing adult education along the way. Stuart Comer materialized to work his magic at several crucial junctures, and this exhibition has benefited tremendously from his involvement. Lizzie Gorfaire undertook the difficult work of realizing my performances within the MoMA context. Peter Oleksik demonstrated the full scope of his technological prowess through the tolerance and sympathy with which he approached my stubbornly low-tech media installations. The expertise and dedication of MoMA's Publications Department is evident in every page of this catalogue. I have been privileged to work closely with Emily Hall, Chris Hudson, and Hannah Kim on it and the accompanying reader and installation brochure. I am immensely indebted to Emily for her rigor, precision, and unyielding pursuit of lucid prose, and to Chris for his heroic patience, tolerance, good judgment, and sense of humor at every step of the publication process. Hannah Kim joined the design process at precisely that moment at which we have been best able to appreciate her very considerable talent, resourcefulness, and quick thinking.

The only support team that even begins to measure up to MoMA's is my own. Aude Pariset's steady presence, persistence, and technological sophistication have contributed crucially to every aspect of our activities and planning for this exhibition from the beginning. Sophie Mattheus put her wealth of prior curatorial, administrative, and organizational experience to work the minute she joined the team, and has guided to successful completion the most challenging exhibition project we will ever face. Levno von Plato has contributed finely honed analytical skills, fortitude, and commitment to conquering
the paperwork required at each step of our administrative procedures. Elise Lammer’s help and support in launching this project in its early stages greatly benefited its later stages. Katharina Roeck Martinelli’s superb restorations and Viola Eickmeier’s exceptional refabrications restored to me a vivid memory of early periods of my productivity. And Timo Ohler’s exceptional photography is the source of many of the most beautiful images in this catalogue. The human and technological resources of the digital-engineering team at Concept AV in Berlin provided invaluable and expeditious support at every stage, often with virtually no advance warning.

A selection of works from this exhibition will travel to the Hammer Museum and the Haus der Kunst under the name Adrian Piper: Concepts and Intuitions, 1965–2016. I am deeply grateful to Ann Philbin and Ulrich Wilmers for their enthusiasm and commitment in taking on this exhibition, and not least of all for their patience and fortitude in weathering the vicissitudes of our protracted process of planning its traveling schedule.

Among the gallerists whose cooperation was essential to the success of this project, I owe a special debt of thanks first and foremost to Dominique Lévy and Begum Yasar for their unstinting support and generosity at every level. I am also grateful to Emi Fontana, Elizabeth Dee, Thomas Erben, and Paula Cooper for their cooperation. All of the lenders to this exhibition have contributed immensely to its success, and my appreciation for their generosity is very great. Special thanks is due to Sabine Breitwieser, Director first of the Generali Foundation and then of the Museum der Moderne Salzburg, who has for many years managed the Generali’s extensive collection of my work according to the highest curatorial and custodial standards. Other collectors to whom I am deeply grateful include Beth Rudin DeWoody, Nicola Ferraro, Lonti Ebers, and Peter Norton. There are many more individuals I could name here whose contributions to and participation in this project have been absolutely crucial. But I hope I have said enough to make clear that it has been a fully collaborative endeavor at every stage and at every level. I am merely the front man.

Adrian Piper
Berlin, January 27, 2018
CURATORS’ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Since the early 1960s Adrian Piper has been producing uncompromising and groundbreaking work that has profoundly shaped contemporary art. Spanning five decades, Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965-2016, and the traveling exhibition Adrian Piper: Concepts and Intuitions, 1965-2016, recognize the artist’s significant influence, surveying the full range of diverse media in which she has contributed. The scope of such a monumental retrospective would not have been possible without the dedicated exhibition teams at The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and Haus der Kunst, Munich.

First and foremost, the staff at the Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin (APRA) has been instrumental in realizing this exhibition over the past four years. We thank Aude Pariset, Registrar, for her continued support and, more recently, Levno von Plato, Archivist, and Sophie Mattheus, Assistant Director. We also thank Elise Lammer, the former Exhibitions Assistant at APRA, for her early contributions to the project.

At MoMA we wish to wholeheartedly acknowledge the generosity of Gwen and Peter Norton who decisively advocated on behalf of Adrian’s art at the Museum and donated two seminal works to the collection in 2011. We are also deeply grateful for the support of our Trustees, including Agnes Gund, President Emeritus and Chairman of the Board of MoMA PST; Jerry I. Speyer, Chairman; Marie-Josée Kravis, President; Marlene Hess, Vice Chairman; and Donald B. Marron, President Emeritus, for his leadership as Chairman of the Committee on Drawings and Prints. These Trustees, along with the generous assistance of Donald L. Bryant, Jr.; Eileen and Michael Cohen; Lonti Ebers; Carol and Morton Rapp; and Candace King Weir, in addition to The Committee on Drawings and Prints, The Friends of Education of The Museum of Modern Art, and The Modern Women’s Fund, have helped us demonstrate our commitment to Adrian’s work, through their abundant support toward acquisitions in multiple departments. And we heartily reiterate the thanks of our directors to all the sponsors of the exhibition.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the many private and public lenders who have shared their work for this exhibition, including Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin; Konrad Baumgartner; Neal Benezra, Director, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Sabine Breitwieser, Artistic and Managing Director, Museum der Moderne Salzburg; Antonia Lotz, Curator, The Generali Foundation and Collection, Salzburg; John Campione; Alain Cravitz and Shashi Caudill; Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York; Lisa Dorin, Manuscripts and Collections, UVa; Piers Fawkes, Curator, Collection Robert Motherwell; Alice Feltz, Curator, Collection Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton; Anne Fine, Curator, Collection Harvard University; Roberta Gordon, Curator, Collection National Gallery of Art, Washington; Loredana Lattuada, Curator, Collection Fondation Louis Vuitton; Tania Marques, Curator, Collection Néstor Martino; Lucía Martín, Curator, Collection MAPFRE; Ilaria Migliaccio, Curator, Collection Fondazione Prada; Elizabeth Ritter, Curator, Collection Fondazione Prada; Satoko Sato, Curator, Collection Saitama City Museum of Contemporary Art; Robin Silver, Curator, Collection LACMA; Michael Westheim, Curator, Collection Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden; and the many lenders who wish to remain private.

This publication could not have been realized without the unwavering dedication and commitment of the Department of Publications at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. We thank Christopher Hudson, Publisher; Don McMahon, Editorial Director; Marc Sapir, Production Director; Cerie Fontaine, Department Manager; Hannah Kim, Senior Marketing and Production Coordinator, for her first-rate management of the images and design; and Editor Emily Hall for her unflappable and expert handling of the authors’ texts and for being a conduit for the artist’s voice in this process. These individuals were all crucial in bringing the catalogue to fruition, while Adam Michaels and Sílvia Tännler of Inventory Form & Content produced a beautiful design that beautifully communicates Adrian’s multifaceted work.

MoMA’s Director, Glenn D. Lowry, championed the exhibition through its many stages, providing unwavering support and guidance along the way and critical leadership when essential. The direct involvement of Ramona Bannayan, Senior Deputy Director for Exhibitions and Collections, was essential for our exhibition’s success. We are grateful for the dedication of James Gara, Chief Operating Officer and Assistant Treasurer; Kathy Halbreich, former Associate Director and now Curator and Advisor to the Director of the Laurenz Foundation; Peter Reed, Senior Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs; and Tod
Bishop, Senior Deputy Director for External Affairs. Many thanks are also due to Quentin Bajac, The Joel and Anne Ehrenkranz Chief Curator of Photography; Stuart Comer, Chief Curator, Department of Media and Performance Art; Rajendra Roy, The Celeste Bartos Chief Curator of Film; Martino Stierli, The Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design; and Ann Temkin, The Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Chief Curator of Painting and Sculpture.

Every member of MoMA’s exhibitions team has played a valuable role in the New York presentation. Their tireless, kind, and patient dedication to the project was truly remarkable and made the seemingly impossible possible. A special thanks to the meticulous and skilled management of Jennifer Cohen, Associate Director of Exhibition Planning and Administration, and Maya Taylor, Department Assistant, Exhibition Planning and Administration, along with Cate Griffin, Exhibition Manager, and Erik Patton, Director, Exhibition Planning and Administration and Senior Administration and Planning Expansion Project Manager.

We have been grateful for the talent and boundless expertise of Mack Cole-Edelsack, Senior Design Manager, who traveled to Berlin multiple times to work directly with Adrian on realizing a complicated installation with absolute finesse, and his colleagues in the Exhibition Design and Production department, led by Lani Hum, Director, with contributions from Michele Arms, Assistant Production Manager, and Harry Harris, Department Coordinator. Our gratitude also goes to Patty Lipshutz, General Counsel and Secretary to the Board, and Nancy Adelson, Deputy General Counsel, who creatively solved the many questions and concerns that arose, and to Jessica Nilsen, Associate Registrar, Exhibitions, for coordinating the safe delivery of art from near and far with her colleagues Caitlin Kelly, Senior Registrar Assistant, and Sacha Eaton, Associate Registrar. Our thanks to Lizzie Gorfaine, Assistant Director, Programs Producer, and Kate Scherer, Assistant Performance Coordinator, Exhibition Planning and Administration, who expertly handled the many performative works in the show, and Aaron Louis, Director of Audio Visual, and his team, who set the stage for Adrian’s multifaceted installations. Matias Pacheco, Senior Manager of Client Services, Information Technology, and Chiara Bernasconi, Assistant Director, Digital Media, brought their skills as well to the exhibition’s installation. We extend our thanks to Athena Hoilbrook, Collection Specialist, Department of Media and Performance Art; to Kurt Heumiller, Studio Production Manager, and Paul Abbey, Preparator, from the Imaging and Visual Resources department; to Tom Krueger, Assistant Manager, Art Handling and Preparation; and to former MoMA Photographer Peter Butler and Greg Deering of Atelier 4 for their last-minute assistance imaging the final works for inclusion in this publication.

Our colleagues in MoMA’s Department of Graphic Design and Advertising created a cohesive voice for the exhibition’s didactic material. They are Ingrid H. Y. Chou, Associate Creative Director; with Damien Saatdjian, Art Director; Eva Bochem-Shur, Senior Graphic Designer; and Claire Corey, Production Manager. Thank you to Robert Kastler, Director of Imaging and Visual Resources, and his associates; and to Peter Perez, Frame Shop Foreman, Exhibition Design and Production, for his kind and knowledgeable insight, also to his staff for framing works and preparing gallery labels and signage. Thanks also to Sarah Wood, Assistant Manager, Art Handling and Preparation, and all of our art handlers under Rob Jung’s leadership as Manager, Art Handling and Preparation.

We also thank Michelle Elligott, Chief of Archives, Library, and Research Collections; Michelle Harvey, Rona Roob Museum Archivist; and Librarian Jennifer Tobias for their eagerness in fielding research questions over the last five years; Wendy Woon, The Edward John Noble Foundation Deputy Director for Education; Pablo Helguera, Director, Adult and Academic Education; Sara Bodinson, Director, Interpretation, Research, and Digital Learning; Sarah Kennedy, Assistant Director, Learning Programs and Partnerships; Jess Van Nostrand, Assistant Director, Exhibition Programs and Gallery Initiatives; Adelia Gregory, Associate Educator, Public Programs and Gallery Initiatives; Francesca Rosenberg, Director of Community and Access Programs, Lara Schweller, Coordinator, Community and Access Programs; Maria Marchenkovka, Assistant Editor, Publications, each for helping us with our educational programming and making this exhibition accessible to all. And thanks to Audrey Stolz, Assistant Director, Visitor Services; Tunji Adeniji, Director of Facilities and Safety, Daniel Platt, Director of Security; Tyrone Wylie, Associate Director of Security; and their entire highly dedicated teams; for all their efforts to welcome visitors to the exhibition and ensure the safety of our guests and the works on view. Our thanks to Kate Lewis, The Agnes Gund Chief Conservator, The David Booth Conservation Center and Department; Laura Neufeld, Assistant Conservator; Erika Mosier, Conservator; LeeAnn Daffner, Photography Conservator; Peter Oleksik, Associate Conservator; Amy Brost, Assistant Media Conservator, for overseeing all aspects of the exhibition’s conservation needs. To Maggie Lyko, Director, Affiliate/Donor Programs, and Director, Special Programming and Events, and to Jessie Cappello, Events Coordinator, Special Programming and Events, go our thanks for organizing the exhibition’s opening events. Thanks also to Rebecca Stokes, Director, Digital Initiatives, External Affairs; Meg Montgoris, Publicist, Communications; Margaret Doyle, former Director of Communications; and former Chief Communications Officer Kim Mitchell for helping us advance this exhibition to the public with the grace it deserves. Thanks to Laura Coppelli, Associate Director, Human Resources, for skillfully managing our staffing needs.

The exhibition and publication were made possible by the entire staff of the Department of Drawings and Prints at The Museum of Modern Art, New York: John Prochilo, Department Manager, and Alex Diczok, Assistant to the Chief Curator, provided vital organizational support. We thank Ana Torok, Curatorial Assistant, for her assistance with research and exhibition support. We would like to extend our gratitude to Department Assistants Emily Manges and Kiko Aebi, who seamlessly handled a multitude of requests; to our Preparators Jeff White and David Moreno; to Sydney Briggs, our
Department’s dedicated Associate Registrar, Collections; to Jane Cavalier, Curatorial Assistant, for her indispensable assistance at the end; to Emily Cushman, Collection Specialist, who accommodated many rushed photography requests with the help of Robert Gerhardt, Collections Photographer in Imaging and Visual Resources; and to Emily Edisson, Collection Specialist, Acquisitions and Loans, and Heidi Hirshcl Orley, Curatorial Expansion Project Manager. We would also like to thank the many seasonal interns who have participated in this project over the past four years, including Carey Gibbons, Isabelle Rose, Alymamah Rashed, and Sila Ulug. We give special thanks to our former Louise Bourgeois Intern, Jennie Waldow, for her contributions during the initial stages of this exhibition’s research, and to Curatorial Assistant Tara Keny, who lent her expertise to the catalogue during the final critical moments, as well as to Ashley James, former Museum Research Consortium Fellow, who provided a thoughtfully considered voice to our exhibition texts. We would also like to thank Jodi Hauptman, Senior Curator, for her sage advice during our work on this exhibition.

The Hammer Museum has been a partner since the project’s inception. Director Ann Philbin advocated bringing Adrian’s work to Los Angeles from the beginning, and we thank her and Deputy Director, Curatorial Affairs, Cynthia Burlingham for their unfailing support. Director, Exhibition and Publication Management, Melanie Crader has expertly coordinated every detail of administration and installation of the project at the Hammer with Director, Registration and Collections Management, Portland McCormick; Chief Preparator, Jason Pugh; and Assistant Director, Exhibition Design and Production, Peter Gould, who designed the installation. Assistant Curator Erin Christovale was an integral part of coordinating and activating the exhibition. Director, Public Programs, Claudia Bestor provided dynamic evening programs and events that brought the exhibition to life for a broader audience.

Haus der Kunst extends immense thanks to its entire team, without whose professional work and tireless engagement this exciting project could not have been realized: to the members of the curatorial team for their valuable input, with Julienne Lorz, Sabine Brantl, Anna Schneider, Daniel Milnes, and most particularly to Chief Curator Ulrich Wilmes; to Melissa Klein and Isabella Krelder, for managing the director’s and curatorial offices; to External Affairs, with Tina Anjou, Elena Heitsch, Teresa Lengl, Iris Ludwig, and Andrea Weniger, as well as Anne Leopold and Sylvia Clasen and the entire team of the Children’s and Youth Programs; and to interim Commercial Managing Director Dr. Stefan Gros and our former Finance Director Marco Graf von Matuschka and Moritz Petersen, for managing the finances and administration. Special thanks go Tina Köhler and Registrar Cassandre Schmid for the organization and coordination required to bring the show to Munich, and to all the members of their team: Conservators Susanne von der Groeben and Marjen Schmidt, Installers Elena Carvajal, Tanja Eiler, Moritz Friedrich, Martin Hast, Marzieh Kermani, Oh-Seok Kwon, Christian Leitna, Thomas Silberhorn, Tim Wolff, and Technical Director Anton Köttl and the members of his team, including Markus Brandenburg, Hans-Peter Frank, and Roland Roppelt.

The exhibition and this catalogue would not have been possible without the fervent commitment of Tessa Ferreyros, Curatorial Assistant, who has helped realize the project from its inception four years ago. Her invaluable, patient, and intelligent contributions to the exhibition history, bibliography, chronology, and every aspect of this complex exhibition have been instrumental to the realization of this project.

The curators would also like to acknowledge and thank Rhea Anastas, Paula Cooper and Steven Henry of Paula Cooper Gallery, Elizabeth Dee and the staff of her gallery, Elyse Goldberg, Dan Graham, Jean-Noël Herlin, Susan Inglett, Dominique Lévy and Begum Yasar of Lévy Gorvy gallery, Andrea Miller-Keller, the late Kynaston McShine, Gregory R. Miller, Amy O’Neill, Amy Baker Sandback, Susanna Singer, Lawrence Weiner, and Martha Wilson for their advice, insight, and counsel.

Most of all, we would like to thank Adrian Piper. The exhibition and publications have been produced through an utter and true collaboration with you. Your guidance has thoroughly reshaped our understanding of your practice and has provided us with invaluable insights and fresh means of exploring your life and art. Your dedication to every step of this project has made it possible for us to bring your work to a broad audience with intimate clarity and immeasurable depth.
WHO CALLS THE TUNE?
IN AND OUT OF THE HUMMING ROOM

CHRISTOPHE CHERIX
When I am alone in the solitude of my study or studio, I am completely out of the closet: I move back and forth easily among art, philosophy, and yoga (my third hat). It's the only time I feel completely free to be who I am. So I will go to almost any lengths to protect my privacy. If I lose that, I lose everything.

—Adrian Piper

An installation of contemporary art calls for its curator to focus on a work of art in relation both to the artist's practice and to visitors to the exhibition, so that two logics apply simultaneously: one remarkably singular, carrying the artist's structures of thought, and the other multiple by definition, as various as the perceptions of the public that will see it. An exhibition that has managed to remain faithful to the artist's vision while also attending to viewers is Do It, an itinerant and ongoing project that started in 1993 as a conversation between a curator, Hans Ulrich Obrist, and two artists, Christian Boltanski and Bertrand Lavier. The art for this exhibition exists primarily as instructions dictated by artists, and it is up to the curators at each venue to fabricate the works according to the requirements of their specific space as well as to the idiosyncrasies of their given public—thus the injunction, "Do it!"

The different iterations of Do It have revealed, however, that the initial injunction might have meant different things to those who first conceived the show: to the curators it has suggested the freedom to interpret and carry out the instructions of the artists, while to some of the artists it has suggested direct engagement with the public. Indeed, most of the artists involved with Do It have chosen participatory works—works that ask viewers to take part in the art itself, either by being directly asked to do so or by interacting with the work more spontaneously—such as Felix Gonzalez-Torres's proposal for a sculpture made of candies that visitors could take and eat.

Adrian Piper was invited to participate in Do It in 2012, and for it she designed a participatory work titled The Humming Room, made up of an empty room guarded by a security officer (fig. 1). On the work's origins, and the particular events that triggered its conception, Piper has noted,

The Humming Room was conceived in direct response to Hans Ulrich's invitation, and it came up in my mind very quickly after I heard from him. It emerged fully formed, POP! out of my subconscious. I didn't have to think or reason my way to it at all. But I do think the particular events going on in my life at that time had an influence on it, definitely. I had been having very friendly communications with an academic institution on my side of the Atlantic that had expressed an interest in further affiliation, and this presented a conflict. On the one hand, I was very flattered because it was so highly ranked in the world of academia; on the other hand, my prior experiences of the dysfunctionality of highly ranked academic institutions (I talk about some of these in [the memoir] Escape to Berlin) had produced a very pronounced aversive reaction to the very thought of any such affiliation. Then I realized that of course my designated identity as African American was enhancing my attractiveness, and that was also part of a very familiar...
IN ORDER TO ENTER THE ROOM,
YOU MUST HUM A TUNE.
ANY TUNE WILL DO.

BEGIN HUMMING
AS YOU APPROACH
THE GUARD.

Fig. 2
*The Humming Room*, 2012
Exhibition instruction. Pencil on graph paper with digital additions
8 ½ x 11 in. (21.6 cm x 27.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
dysfunctional pattern I had previously experienced. My piece *Thwarted Projects, Dashed Hopes, A Moment of Embarrassment* (fig. 3) came up in my mind on the heels of that realization. That piece had an incredibly liberating effect on me. It made me laugh at myself, at all such institutions, at their dysfunctionality, and at their pretensions to authority. So when I received Hans Ulrich’s invitation, I was in a very happy, jubilant place. Psychologically, I had just detached myself from any dependence on such authority for my sense of self-worth. I was feeling free and humorous. That was the soil in which *The Humming Room* took root. It was a perfect expression of my state of mind at that moment, a joyous celebration of my final release from a whole set of needs, desires, anxieties, and ambitions connected with institutional validation.  

Any visitor who wishes to enter *The Humming Room* is given the following instructions, also printed above the door to the room: “IN ORDER TO ENTER THE ROOM, YOU MUST HUM A TUNE. ANY TUNE WILL DO.” Right at the entrance, visitors are met with a paradoxical proposition—an obligation that can be fulfilled any way they wish. “Any tune will do” allows everyone—of all ages and backgrounds, with or without prior knowledge of the artist’s work—creativity and personal interaction in an otherwise apparently inflexible framework. “I firmly believe,” Piper added, that everyone is creative and everyone is potentially an artist. All children are artists. I believe that they stop drawing or painting or singing or dancing in response to social pressure—from their family or peers or figures of institutional authority, who force them to shut up in order to fit in. But just because their creative impulses to self-expression are suppressed doesn’t mean that they are extinguished. They’re still there, waiting for some context that will give them permission to emerge.  

A freestanding stanchion, reminiscent of border-control signage, next to *The Humming Room*’s entrance informs visitors to “BEGIN HUMMING AS YOU APPROACH THE GUARD.” No material record of this work is meant to outlast any specific installation, other than a sketch Piper drew at the time of its creation (fig. 2), the primary function of which was instructional, for the curators. Everything else—the guard, the room, the signage—has changed at each subsequent presentation of the work. What is distinctive about *The Humming Room*, beyond the preposterous nature of its directive, is its ephemeral nature and ever-changing nature. It seems safe to say that there will never be identical tunes hummed simultaneously in any of the empty rooms. The work is also characterized by how it cancels out the very possibility of an audience: because visitors must hum while they are in the room, they automatically become performers of the work. They carry out the artist’s directions but without the artist’s being physically present. For this reason, only a participating audience can experience *The Humming Room*; the work forces those who enter to cross the mirror between artist and public. Visitors thus take on, for a brief moment, the role of the artist. They are free to forget where they are, what brought them there, and even who it was who gave
them such mysterious instructions. Until they exit the room, the agency is all theirs: their private tunes to hum, their sole encounters to stumble upon, and their own show to run.

Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965–2016, the artist’s 2018 retrospective at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, will be the first time in MoMA’s history that the work of a living artist will occupy the entirety of its sixth-floor special-exhibitions gallery. And in this presentation, The Humming Room will undergo a slight but significant change. Rather than inhabiting a separate room, as it has in various iterations of Do It, the only times it had been staged until now, The Humming Room will be positioned two-thirds of the way into the vast spaces of the show—slightly altering the strict chronological order of the works up to that point—as an obligatory passageway, the only way to get from the first two-thirds of the exhibition to the last. This placement doubles the inconvenience of failing to agree to the terms of the work: uncooperative visitors exclude themselves not only from The Humming Room but from the rest of the exhibition—which they will either have to miss entirely or else gain access to by backtracking and reentering at the other end. But for both the visitors who do go through and those who do not, the concept of authority might suddenly signify differently—as arbitrary, perhaps, or as ridiculous as the instruction to hum a tune. On this particular placement of the work, Piper has recalled, Piper’s work has confronted viewers in similar ways in earlier pieces, notably in Food for the Spirit (1971) (fig. 4 and pages 186–93), a sequence of fourteen gelatin silver prints showing a mirror reflection of Piper holding a camera pointed at herself, in the mirror, and at the viewer: always in the same pose, with or without clothing, in various degrees of darkness. The work came about during a summer when Piper was obsessively studying Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason and felt herself in danger of disappearing:

I rigged up a camera and tape recorder next to the mirror so that every time the fear of losing myself overtook me and drove me to the “reality check” of the mirror, I was able both to record my physical appearance objectively, and also record myself on tape repeating the passage in the Critique that was currently driving me to self-transcendence.²

But in the photographs Piper seems to stare as much at us as at herself, so that the work ultimately feels less about depicting the artist than about bringing us into the work. When we lock gazes with the artist, we become the object of her camera. The photographs become an improbable mirror image of the viewer on the verge of disappearance not only literally, into the darkness of the room, but also metaphorically, forcing us back on to the question of how, often unconsciously, we differentiate ourselves. Captured by the camera pointed toward us but perhaps not resembling the person represented in the image facing us, we nevertheless, despite all evidence, become her reflection, and she becomes ours.

From very early on in Piper’s practice, the relationship between viewers—exhibition visitors, passersby, or fixed audience—and artwork has been paramount. Piper belongs to a generation of artists who emerged in New York right after the advent of what is called (much too reductively) Minimalism, in which works of art exist through their spatial surroundings, often completed by the viewer’s physical engagement with them. In many ways Piper, in parallel with artists such as Hanne Darboven, Dan Graham, and Vito Acconci, liberated themselves from Minimalism by pushing its logic further. Some of them rejected the object altogether. By not necessarily
Fig. 4

Food for the Spirit #8, 1971
Gelatin silver print (printed 1997)
14 5/8 × 14 5/8 in. (37 × 37.7 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Family of Man Fund
Detail: one of fourteen
producing material things to be looked at or by shifting their focus to things not always understood as objects—such as, in Piper’s work, a sheet of paper—this generation moved away from the museum and the gallery and explored new venues for art, such as the pages of magazines, the street, and the theater.

One particularly telling example is Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City (figs. 5, 6 and pages 178, 179), Piper’s first public performance. It was realized on May 2, 1970, in the eponymous New York bar, a popular gathering place for artists and musicians, as part of The Saturday Afternoon Show, a one-hour group exhibition of performance-based works, organized by the American poet Hannah Weiner. The artist walked around the bar wearing long gloves, high boots, earplugs, a nose plug, a long-sleeved shirt, and a blindfold. Piper, in this performance, isolated herself completely from her surroundings, unable to see, touch, hear, and smell, putting herself deliberately in a particularly vulnerable situation that was reinforced by her youth, gender, and sheer presence in a bar infamous for its regular brawls. One of the work’s most striking aspects was the way in which it wholly disconnected performer from (unsuspecting) audience and questioned its own existence. Did the work exist only in the perception of the bar patrons who, with a sense of disbelief, watched someone clearly not inebriated but entirely alienated from her environment, occasionally stumbling over the furniture or onto people? Or did it lie in the mind of the performer anxiously moving around an utterly foreign space, struggling to grasp the world around her, constantly juggling so as not to lose track of time? The experiences could not be farther apart, with performer and audience sharing only the fact of being—either literally or metaphorically—kept in the dark. As The Humming Room does, Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City throws into question the roles of the viewer and the performer/artist, and their relationship.

Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City is a profoundly disenchanted work. It doesn’t lead to a moment of truth or reconciliation, in which the performer ultimately reconnects with the audience by, for example, removing her blindfold and earplugs. The artist presents herself at a complete remove from the public, numb to the environment around her, as if the very roles of art in a modern society—such as promoting social change and anticipating future progress—were relegated to a distant past or place. The work ultimately posits the viewer and the artist as inseparable, irreconcilable, as if head and tail of a single coin.

In the same Saturday Afternoon Show, Acconci—the poet, artist, and coeditor of the experimental magazine 0 TO 9, to which Piper had previously contributed—performed Rubbing Piece (1970) (fig. 7), which became one of his most notorious works. The performance, Acconci explained, consisted in “sitting alone at a booth, during the ordinary activity at the restaurant. Rubbing my left forearm for an hour, gradually producing a sore.” The historian Nick Kaye, who approached Conceptual art through the lens of performance and media installation, noted about this work that

in his notes to the performance, [Acconci] recounts a logic in which as artist, he becomes “Performer as producer (I give myself the sore); performer as consumer (I receive

Figs. 5, 6
Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City, 1970
Documentation of the performance. Four gelatin silver prints
Each 3⅛ × 3⅛ in. (9 × 9 cm)
Photograph by Rosemary Mayer
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Details:
photograph #4
photograph #2
Fig. 7

Vito Acconci

Rubbing Piece. 1970

Ten silver dye bleach prints and colored pencil on board

Overall 29 1/4 x 40 3/4 in. (76 x 102 cm)

the sore)" and in which "rather than do an act that takes place elsewhere, my body can be a place on which an event is enacted." Here, Acconci acts out his body as the material and place of the artwork, proposing that his performance "consists in marking myself as performer: marking time." In the process, Acconci ... works toward imbrications of public and private activities and spaces. In this private action in a public space, Acconci suggests, he creates "a piece of biography that ordinarily would not have become part of one's active biography at all," where the exposure of the sore amounts to the "exposure of a secret." Indeed, this exposure of a private act in a public work, Acconci supposes, produces "performance as overlapping situations: one place in two different social occasions at one time."

In a single hour at Max's Kansas City, two groundbreaking performances took place, remarkably different and at the same time similar. Both used the body as material and simultaneously included and excluded their audience (in neither of them was the public allowed to participate), but one—Acconci's—clearly marks time and opens a private sphere, while the other—Piper's—rejects time and any incursion of the audience into the artist's private life.

Much later, in the 2000s, Piper would articulate her relationship to the viewer in a very different manner, not only with works such as The Humming Room but also with The Probable Trust Registry: The Rules of the Game #1-3 (figs. 8, 9 and pages 308, 309), a participatory performance conceived and first shown in a gallery setting—at Elizabeth Dee Gallery, in New York, in 2013—and two years later at the Venice Biennale, for which she received the Golden Lion award for the fair's best artist. As for The Humming Room, the work entirely relies on audience participation; unlike Untitled Performance at Max's Kansas City, it aims to establish direct rapport within the public and between the visitors and the artist. The work comprises three desks at which visitors may sign an electronic contract pledging a personal commitment to three things: "I will always mean what I say," "I will always be too expensive to buy," and "I will always do what I say I am going to do." The relationship between The Probable Trust Registry and The Humming Room, according to Piper, is that

in some ways [they] are in harmony; in other ways they are in counterpart. I am not aware of any causal influence between them. But both probably arise from my jaded attitude toward institutional authority. The Probable Trust Registry is in a way my response to the despair induced by recognizing, at a deep level, that the human institutions that are supposed to civilize and prepare us for a stable community anchored in shared interests and values are not working, and never have worked, because institutional professions of commitment to those values almost always mask a bottomless pit of need to accumulate, preserve, and extend personal power. As usual, self-interest trumps (you will pardon the pun) impartiality and greed trumps the common good. The Probable Trust Registry reminds us that there is more to human nature than that, and of what the benefits would be if each and every one of us were
willing to put greed on hold, just for one minute, just for this action right now, for the sake of the common good, and it offers each participant the opportunity to explore those other parts of human nature.

I think *The Humming Room* can be viewed as offering an alternative path into that exploration, by poking gentle fun at institutional authority rather than despairing over its corruptions. After all, institutional representatives are just trying to do their jobs the best way they can, no matter how ridiculous or incompetent they may look to a detached observer—just like the guard who orders us to hum a tune, any tune, as a condition of admission to the room. But both pieces are similar in that each creates a new kind of elite: of those who are willing to make a public commitment to live by their principles as best they can in the case of *The Probable Trust Registry*, and of those who are willing to take the risk of spontaneous self-expression in the case of *The Humming Room*. In that respect, both also bear a relationship to *The Order of Celestial Laughter*, which creates an elite of humorous humility. These are some elites worth joining.

*The Order of Celestial Laughter* (2017) is, like the other two works, a participatory group performance, but it is one that exists solely in the mind of its participants rather than in performative acts such as signing a contract or executing an instruction. *The Order of Celestial Laughter*'s membership—which, as it is in *The Probable Trust Registry*, is disclosed only to its members but, contrarily to it, is open exclusively by invitation—shares, according to the artist, “the rare capacity to laugh at themselves” while making sure to stay away from any form of “ridicule, mockery, scorn, or contempt.”

In the 2000s Piper’s work has consistently attempted, through varied approaches, to bring audiences together, to rally communities around common values and ideas. In parallel with the astonishing development of social media, Piper has pushed her work into a new frontier, vaulting it into a world in which customary notions of networks, communication, and civil engagement are being redefined.

Like *The Order of Celestial Laughter*, *The Humming Room* is full of irony, but it is also a work full of happiness, humor, and the potential for self-enjoyment, a trait that is intermittently woven into the fabric of Piper’s work. The sadness brought on by the current state of our society—a feeling that was particularly acute when *The Humming Room* was made, in a year marked by senseless massacres, in the United States, of children and moviegoers—has never been for Piper an excuse for surrendering to melancholy. Humor can be a powerful tool for addressing difficult issues, such as the exercise of institutional power and its potential abuses. The artist, poet, and filmmaker Marcel Broodthaers, in spite of his own melancholic tendencies, also confronted the economic structures and critical authorities of his time and place—the late 1960s and early 1970s in postwar Belgium—with a blend of provocation and light humor. Among the many examples that come to mind is an untitled work referred to as “General with cigar,” from 1970 (figs. 11, 12), a work involving not a simple instruction but a single gesture—the sticking of a cigar into the mouth.
of a painted portrait of a military general that the artist had bought at a flea market. Broodthaers later recalled of this work,

I made a little hole in the general's pinched mouth so as to insert a cigar butt. In this object-portrait, there is a fortunate tonal harmony. The paint is brown, sort of pissy, and so is the cigar butt. Not just any cigar would suit any general's mouth...the caliber of the cigar, the shape of the mouth.12

The Humming Room takes a radically different approach. In contrast with Broodthaers's symbolical silencing of the general, Piper aims to liberate the voices of visitors:

The voice occupies a special position in the range of creative human capabilities. It is the only instrument we can play without the involvement of some external object, such as a violin or a paintbrush or a computer. That gives it a direct and immediate link to our fundamental impulse of self-expression, which enables a greater degree of spontaneity in self-expression than with any other instrument. At the same time, when we hum, we tame that instrument in a manner that produces a clearly modulated sound, but without needing to undergo the rigorous training that many other instruments require. For that reason it is pleasurable and fulfilling in a modest but special way. Sometimes when people have not been using their voice in that way for a long time—perhaps even not since childhood—they have to be coaxed into remembering its power as an instrument of creative experience. They may even be intimidated, by hearing the extraordinary performance of a great opera or jazz singer, into thinking that they don't have that power at all, if they ever did. But of course they did, and still do. For people who know this, and hum regularly, The Humming Room will offer an opportunity to revel in the enjoyment of exercising their instrument. But for people who don't know it, they'll find out—that is, if they want to get through to the last room of the exhibition in the right sequence. For those people, perhaps they will, indeed, remember the tune they hummed as the moment they were forced to rediscover their own creative voice.13

Music and rhythm have been an intrinsic part of Piper's life, beginning when she was seven years old, with piano lessons and
ballet lessons, and leading to wide involvement with all kinds of music, both as performer and composer. Rosemary Mayer, the artist and a close friend of Piper, who documented a number of the Catalysis works in now-iconic photographs, recalled Aretha Franklin Catalysis (1971–72):

Piper has performed her Aretha Franklin Piece several times this past year. The piece began with Piper’s memorizing “Respect” until she could hear the entire song in her mind at will. The piece itself involved her listening to the song in her mind and simultaneously dancing to it. She dances a mixture of the Bugaloo, the Jerk, the Lindy, the Strut and the Twist with lots of improvisation.

The Aretha Franklin Piece opened the way for Piper’s first performance for an audience, Some Reflective Surfaces (1975–76) (page 216). In it, Piper, sporting glasses and crossing genders as well as races in ambiguous attire and whiteface makeup, appeared facing the audience under a spotlight. Various recordings played over the course of the work—the artist recalling her experience as a discotheque dancer; Franklin’s “Respect,” as Piper danced against the projection of a film of her and some of her graduate-school classmates dancing; and, finally, an eruptive voice-over of a man shouting at dancers to perform with more elegance.

In an earlier performance, Bach Whistled (1970), which in many ways prefigured The Humming Room, Piper whistled along with recordings of Johann Sebastian Bach’s Concertos in D minor, A minor, and C major, such that, as the artist has written, “at the beginning the whistling is relatively strong, clear, and on key. As the performance progresses, it becomes weaker, flatter, and more like plaintive cheeping.” The performance Funk Lessons (1983–84) (fig. 13) conveys both musicality and direct engagement with the viewer; as the curator Maurice Berger has recalled,
and misperceptions about funk music, elucidating both its fact and its fiction. . . . Finally, the students practiced dance movements with musical accompaniment. Because Piper did not want to intimidate her audience, she attempted to design a “comfortable and safe” format for people to explore their apprehensions about the music and their ability to soul dance. . . . Still, individual audience reactions ranged from enmity and resistance to euphoria. Successful performances ended up as a jubilant dance party; failed ones degenerated into an atmosphere of confusion and resentment. 18

Funk Lessons, like The Humming Room, recruited the public to be its performers (although unlike The Humming Room, it was videotaped). In the former, Piper also clearly opened the discourse to the issue of race, but this is directed primarily at the performing students and only secondarily to any future viewers of the film. The continued existence of Funk Lessons as a work of art is supported only by its documentation; Piper does not wish it to be enacted again, as it was conceived not as a performance but rather as an action in the world. The video allows Funk Lessons to reconnect with an art environment, but the particularity of the work, as it was for Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City, was to exist outside the realm of art. Funk Lessons presented the powerful notion that an artwork can be constituted by an artist leading the public through a process, a groundbreaking idea that supposes nothing less than a renegotiation of the role of the artist, who is cast here as an enlightened educator or, as the critic Robert Storr has said, “as an agent of social change.” 19 In contrast to early twentieth-century artists, whose options were to oppose, support, or turn a blind eye to the transformation of the society around them, Piper’s generation shared the belief that art can provide an adequate platform for activism, and that art itself could be an agent of social change, but few of the artists whose history is interwoven with the advent of Conceptual art have kept such a belief alive through the years. In the early 1970s Conceptual art found its way into the commercial world, irrevocably distancing itself from the public it had hoped to reach, but Piper has never compromised her mission. Her work—in contrast with that of most of her peers, and despite the expectations of the art world—as it changes, continues to challenge society as it changes. One can only hope that future historians will prove her right: that it did make a difference in our world.

While The Humming Room further articulates ideas that had already been present in Piper’s work, it also points toward a web of conceptual practices that emerged in the late 1950s and ripened through the 1960s and ’70s. It is not, for example, the first artwork to use humming as a mode of self-expression. In 1965 the American artist Bob Sheff made a work called Hum (fig. 14), which was published around 1968 in Flux Year Box 2, a box, designed by George Maciunas, containing a number of editioned works (small publications, games, films, instructions) by artists associated with the Fluxus movement. Hum took the form of an instruction piece typeset on a piece of paper:

[And] if you don’t know much about music but you really like a tune you can HUM, then now is high time to

HUM.

-instructions-

Detach a paper, lick lips, bend paper across its longest part, attach to both sprongs of comb between and

HUM.

If you run out of paper or don’t have a comb, take one of those candy boxes which have a large cellophane transparency, bend one end very slightly, blow and

HUM.

And when you don’t have any of these go right ahead and

HUM.

Sheff specifically opens the possibility for HUM to be performed by a group—like many Fluxus works of that period—which anticipates the way in which Piper, without knowing of Sheff’s piece, later defined The Humming Room: a work that can be performed by more than one person at a time, even though humming is a largely solitary practice.

The idea that a space can be filled with something other than objects finds a historical counterpart in Yves Klein’s 1958 exhibition at Galerie Iris Clert, Paris, which bore the lengthy title La Spécialisation de la sensibilité à l’état de matière première en sensibilité picturale stabilisée (The specialization of sensibility in the raw material state into stabilized pictorial sensibility), often simply referred to as Le Vide (The void). The short title is, however, misleading in French: the exhibition was not meant to be empty (another meaning of the French word vide) but to be filled by an immaterial void, in which the visitors of the show could submerge themselves. The Humming Room, also an immersive environment activated by its viewers, builds on such an idea, despite Piper’s limited knowledge of Klein’s work at the time. 21 For both Klein and Piper the relation to viewers is critical, even if for the latter both method and message are approached from a much more straightforward point of view:

I put work into the world for two reasons: first, because I feel compelled to; and second, as an act of communication. I have done work in which I myself am the target of communication, where there is something I can only clarify to myself by putting it outside my mind, out in the world with its own material boundaries. But the temptation is always there to take that process of self-inquiry a step further: Now that I have gotten clear about that idea or image or thing that was in my mind, what will be its relation to other minds? Will it clarify something for them, too? Will they experience it as I do, or in a completely different way? This is part of how I discover who I am, simultaneously with my discovery of who others are: the work enables us to find out what we have in common and what differentiates us from one another, through our similar or dissimilar responses to it. At this point, every work is nothing without the visitors who view it. Any work that exists in its own space implicitly invites us all into a shared space in which we experience it. 22

In genuine expression, HUM can be done by any number of people. 20
... and if you don't know much about music but you really like a tune you can HUM, then now is high time to

HUM

-instructions-
Detach a paper, lick lips, bend paper across its longest part, attach to both spongs of comb between and

HUM.

If you run out of paper or don't have a comb, take one of those candy boxes which have a large cellophane transparency, bend one end very slightly, blow and

HUM.

And when you don't have any of these go right ahead and

HUM.

In genuine expression, HUM can be done by any number of people.


Fig. 14
Bob Sheff
Hum (1965), from Flux Year Box 2. c. 1968
Cigarette papers and pressure-sensitive tape on mimeographed paper
6¾ × 6¾ in. (17.2 × 17 cm)
Uncanny similarities persist, however, between The Humming Room and Le Vide, such as Piper’s placement of a security officer in front of the installation’s door, echoing the two uniformed Republican Guards posted by Klein in front of the gallery on opening night. Klein had also hired two additional guards in order to restrict attendance in the exhibition space, and he himself did not hesitate to expel a visitor who was drawing on one of the walls.23 But it is not Le Vide’s sense of antiquated solemnity that greets the visitor to The Humming Room; rather it is an indisputable signal of authority, with an outcome made clear in Piper’s installation drawing: surrounded by large signs in capital letters, the uniformed guard, hands crossed behind his back, blocks the room’s entrance with his body. It’s up to the viewer to demonstrate a willingness to conform to Piper’s instructions before entering. Such a requirement echoes the many nonnegotiable situations in our daily lives in which we must take certain actions in order to gain access, from airport screening (taking off shoes, allowing ourselves to be patted down) to paying tolls. It might be a cliché but is nevertheless a fact that in modern times artists and authority do not play well together, and Piper is, of course, no exception. Her work regularly takes authority and its many abuses—as directed, for example, against gender and race—as one of its subjects.

Piper’s recent work Howdy #6 (page 310), realized for the first time at the Berlin Biennale, in 2016, meets the viewer very much as The Humming Room does, with a contradiction. It consists of a “no entry” symbol (a red circle with a white horizontal line) projected on a locked door, with the word “HOWDY”—the colloquial contraction for “How do you do?” that is particularly common in the western United States—appearing within the sign’s white rectangle. The pictogram for barred access is thus turned into a framing device for the eruption of a contradiction. Visitors are simultaneously greeted—in a particularly welcoming way, even—and immediately forbidden to advance further. Piper heightened the irony by asking for the work to be installed on a door that cannot be opened by visitors, making the no-entry sign as pointless as the welcome. Of the first presentation of Howdy #6, Piper has recalled,

The Berlin Biennale gave me my first opportunity to realize this piece. I had been doing studies of that particular sign—making drawings, taking photos—for a while, and thinking about the kinds of installations in which I would like to situate it. By that time, I was so far away from an attitude of respectful deference to institutional authority that nothing but demonstrated integrity and excellence could ever bring me back, and I certainly wasn’t expecting that any time soon. Berlin Biennale 9 offered two perfect projection sites for this image—one on a door leading nowhere at the top of a very long stairwell, the other on a closed basement door at the bottom of a very long stairwell. They could not have been better. My preoccupation with that sign had a lot to do with what I was sensing in many countries in their reactions to the refugee crisis at that moment: an official, administrative ambivalence that combined compassion with fear, welcome with rejection, curiosity with distaste. Aside from the compassion part, I had sensed that same ambivalence in official, administrative American reactions to me when I lived there. And now I, too, was an immigrant, had fled from conflicts with authoritative American institutions that had exposed the malevolent underside of their benevolent exteriors.24

The Humming Room is not a forbidden space, but rather one that can be entered if the viewer agrees to submit to authority without any form of explanation or legitimization. Does the guard who stands in front of the room speak on behalf of the art space where the work is shown, the artist, the owner of the work, or all of them at once? How can he enforce his authority? Can he physically block a person from entering the room or evict an uncooperative viewer from the show? Or is he just an actor devoid of any real authority? The answers to these questions might not be of such importance, however; the success of the work seems to be predicated more on the sense of incredulity it instills in viewers. The Humming Room’s larger question is aimed at our natural obedience to apparently arbitrary forms of authority. The viewer’s choice to play along or turn around is made even more significant by the special benevolence of the instruction: to hum a tune while occupying the room, but its particular and contrasting resonance is due to its being located within a cultural institution and pointing to the underlying and often disguised authoritative nature of such institutions. From the security guards, who guide and control the viewers, to the art selected to be exhibited by the curators (which also guides and controls), a museum functions as a social space that generally abides by the same rules of the society of which it is the product. On the presence of security officers in museums, Piper has recalled,

When I was growing up, through my parents I knew a lot of African-American artists who worked as museum guards; and also Sol [LeWitt] worked as a museum guard at one point. I can only speak to how museum guards affect my own experience of work in a museum. I’m always interested in them, and wonder what they do when they are not guarding other artists’ artwork. I tend to project onto them the kind of lives and interests of people I have known who have been museum guards. I hope whoever guards The Humming Room at MoMA will get a kick out of making people hum a tune in order to get through the show.25

The Humming Room demonstrates very clearly the function of museums as social spaces, but it also opens the possibility for viewers to escape the constraints of institutional realities as well as the constraints of the self. Hummers are often unconscious of the fact that they are humming. If humming can fill a void of silence or block the sounds of the outside world, it may also, and perhaps more significantly, allow the individual to transcend the ego, like the chanting that is part of the practice of yoga—a practice well known to the artist. As Piper has explained, the interiority of humming carries a special resonance for her:

A yoga class or darshana meeting usually ends with the chant of OM. You chant OM by taking in a long, deep breath, first filling your belly, then your diaphragm, then your lungs; then, as you open your mouth to form the
vowel and gradually close it around the consonant, you very gradually expel the breath, starting in reverse order, first from the lungs, then from the diaphragm, then from the belly, while you draw out the consonant into a long mmmmmmmmm, until you have completely expelled all the breath you needed to hum the sound. This humming sound replicates a background vibration that is much lower than the human ear can register, and deeper than the human voice can make, but that can be accessed in deep states of meditation. That is why the OM has such a calming, grounding effect on the self at the end of a yoga class. But you can also find that hum in other spiritual traditions, e.g. Gregorian chant. The function is always the same, to anchor the individual ego in deeper levels of the self that transcends it. 

Over the duration of the act, the humming person is gradually taken away from everyday thoughts and somehow puts the conscious mind in check, and thus is able to connect more intensely or directly with another, often physical task being performed, such as sawing, eating—or encountering a work of art.

Allan Kaprow, the pioneer of performance art, who developed the notions of Environments and Happenings, focused a considerable amount of his work on the relationship between art and the everyday. Grounding his approach in the reading of Erving Goffman’s The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, which postulates that ordinary routines of everyday life are similar to performances—although the performers are unaware of it—Kaprow explained,

The performance of everyday routines, of course, is not really the same as acting a written script, since conscious intent is absent. There is a phenomenal and experiential difference. Being a performer (like being a lawyer) involves responsibility for what the word performer may mean and what being a performer may entail. Nor are everyday routines managed by a stage director, although within the theatrical metaphor parents, officials, teachers, guides, and bosses may be construed as equivalents. But again, these mentors would have to see themselves as directors of performance rather than instructors in social mores and professions outside the arts. What is interesting to art, though, is that everyday routines could be used as real offstage performances. An artist would then be engaged in performing a “performance.”

For many people, humming is an everyday routine. What Piper’s Humming Room accomplishes with remarkable efficiency is to change the frame of perception around an absolutely otherwise mundane act. Visitors become performers as they enter the room: they—not the artist—turn what would otherwise be an everyday routine into a performance. Humming in itself, as the anthropologist Michael Taussig has explained, is similar to many everyday sounds, such as that of bees or traffic, belonging to the “sounds that fill the void, sounds that don’t really count, background, we might say, stuff for the likes of John Cage who taunted the line demarcating sound from music.” He further notes that humming implies rhythm. We might say that humming is mostly a rhythm for lips that remain closed, as if incapable or unwilling to vocalize distinct sounds. It is, as noted above, a primarily self-absorbed action, often performed while doing particularly repetitive or long-lasting tasks. As a result humming, largely an introverted practice, allows a form of expression directed toward the self rather than the public, not unlike a prayer. It is a practice that isolates the individual, although in a manner, in both kind and degree, that is much different from some of Piper’s older works, particularly Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City. A humming person remains aware of and connected to the environment but at the same time mysterious to it. The tune being hummed is often difficult for proximate others to identify, and the action has the potential to bring out in them very different responses: perhaps it suggests a kind of benign distancing from the world; or a comforting thought, of family, of a grandmother knitting; or something as fraught as a repressed memory of exploitation, such as the songs hummed by slaves picking cotton under a harsh sun. But despite these responses, in the end, humming is all in the ear of the hummer. The psychiatrist Karen Hopenwasser has observed,

Early in the film 12 Years a Slave, based upon the life of Solomon Northup, we see Northup’s intense emotional struggle with his loss of freedom. Standing at a graveside with other slaves, we watch him listening but resisting participation in the song “Roll Jordan Roll.” Slowly the song rises up from within him until we see him sing forcefully in unison with the others. At that moment we can appreciate the power of communal voices in building resilience and supporting survival. Elsewhere in the film we see the same impact of humming—fostering resilience and survival. The musical complexity of this film addresses the dialectics of slave songs as both resistance and “imagined reconciliation.”

This leads Hopenwasser to wonder what makes humans hum, if it is not to communicate:

We hum when we feel well. We hum when we need to feel better. And we hum when the silence of helplessness would otherwise be lethal. The precursor of sorrow songs, in the various languages of enslaved Africans, evolved into the sorrow songs of slavery, the gospel, blues, the jazz of postbellum America and the freedom songs of the American Civil Rights Movement.

Indeed, humming is not devoid of revolutionary or dissident capacities; it might obscure, for example, defiant lyrics from an overseer. You might hum because you could not or would not dare to sing aloud. As Piper has noted,

It’s potentially a very subversive weapon on its own, even without any lyrics. Imagine that you’re sitting in a packed auditorium, forced to listen to a very pompous reigning authority deliver a stupid, witless, and self-aggrandizing lecture, and you start humming the tune of “Nobody Knows the Trouble I’ve Seen.” Actually humming any tune at all under those circumstances could be much more
effective than shouting down the speaker, which is antidemocratic.\textsuperscript{33}

The Humming Room's participants are directed to follow an instruction whose role seems not only to be weighed against the very arbitrariness of authority displayed to enforce it but also to liberate a sense of their own selves. Piper's work turns the idea of authority upside-down, achieving an almost laughable effect and, perhaps more important, inverting its very objective. Marcel Duchamp, an artist whose influence on the practices of first-generation Conceptual artists cannot be overstated, used such a strategy early in the twentieth century, but he lived in a very different time. For him authority was represented by science, a fairly newly invented discipline that radically changed the way human beings related to their environment. It was Duchamp who came up with the concept of "silly physics," upturning its logic and transforming its outcome.\textsuperscript{34} And it might be no coincidence that Piper, when asked to describe The Humming Room, referred to it in a tongue-in-cheek manner, as an exercise in "silly authority."\textsuperscript{35} She has further noted,

The Humming Room offers a more distanced and compassionate standpoint on those situations of conflict and violence. Policemen are never just figures of authority or emblematic of violence. They are also individuals with families and friends and personal histories, and who often have been brutalized themselves by those in their environments. It is a very great shame that we need policemen at all to make us do what our conscience tells us to do. When policemen try to make us do what our conscience tells us not to do, just get out of their way and remember that at that moment, some of them probably hate their jobs and their lives, wish they didn't need the money, and are rabidly afraid of the victims they think they need to beat or kick or shoot in the back. They are living in a haze of fear of their own collaborative construction; they can't get out and you can't get in. Then you have to weigh the costs of resisting against the costs of hating yourself for betraying your values and becoming like them. It's never an easy choice.\textsuperscript{36}

It is interesting that a work as immaterial as The Humming Room—as effortless in appearance as it is conceptually profound, as likely to generate laughter as anger, as well as being entirely dependent on the participation and willingness of visitors—has somehow become, over the planning of Piper's retrospective exhibition at MoMA, over multiple iterations of the floor plans and checklists, the crux of the show: the only work that compels visitors to understand that authority can only be truly understood when literally exercised. Its greatest achievement may be, however, that it is less a demonstration of the mechanisms of authority than their comic deconstruction. It is nothing else than the work's very instructions that undermine its authority.

And we, the curators of the exhibition, are ultimately the "silly authority" in charge of the project. Curators are invested with expertise, with control, but both are meaningless if not in service of artists and their work. We sometimes entertain the notion that a show can be "defining" for an artist, when to the contrary, some of the most influential artists of the twentieth century—such as Duchamp, Klein, and Broodthaers—have consistently worked against the very idea of definition, instead allowing, even encouraging, multiple interpretations of their work, allowing it to exist in an infinity of contexts. Piper is certainly one such artist. Instead of letting herself be defined by curatorial practices, she has proposed her own definition of the role of curators, dividing them into two categories, artistic curators and admin-curators:

Artistic curators intuitively understand the authorial division of labor between artist and curator, and are skilled at mediating between artist and venue. They are transparent and forthright as to what they can and cannot offer. Our relationship is amicable and rational, whether or not we always agree. I always aim to protect the integrity of my work. But I usually defer to the curator's judgment about its installation and presentation. A healthy collaboration means clear communication, successful problem solving, and a final product we both can be proud of.

Other curators have a more distanced relationship to their own creativity, and function primarily as institutional administrators. They aim to produce an exhibition that puts the artist, the work, and the installation in the service of an institutional, professional, or personal agenda. Institutional agendas might include strengthening the institution's profile in regional art, or competing for government funding. Professional agendas might include networking with peers in a specialized area, or winning promotion. Personal agendas might include promoting artists from one's own class background or diminishing the artist's professional independence. Admin-curators usually cannot state these agendas to the artist explicitly without damaging their relationship, and artists thwart them by insisting on the primacy of the work itself. The result is often poor communication, seemingly arbitrary or perfunctory institutional decisions, backhanded manipulation, and mistrust. Artistic collaboration and institutional mediation are harder with admin-curators. They do best dealing with dead artists.\textsuperscript{37}

To select and arrange for display work that devolves, such as in Piper's case, a very specific kind of agency to the viewers entails a charged kind of responsibility, one that from the start we have thought to share with others. To plumb as thoroughly as possible the complex significations of Piper's work—the phenomenological structures, the ethical choices, the intimacy with which she urges change upon her viewers—we have published Adrian Piper: A Reader in addition to this catalogue, containing in-depth essays by art historians and philosophers. Together with the texts in the present volume, by the exhibition's curators and the artist herself, these essays cover Piper's most salient ideas: becoming an object, embodying social change, being and perceiving anomalies, and—one of her most pressing themes, treated elegantly and precisely in her own essay—how we approach art in our indexical present, in order to perceive ourselves without self-deception and be most open to what the artwork has to offer.


13. Piper, interview.

14. Among Piper’s musical compositions are Shiva DANCES, For God’s Sake (for John Talbert), at APRA, www.adrianpiper.com/vs/shiva.shtml; and sound works such as Construct Madrid (2005).


22. Piper, interview.


24. Piper, interview.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.


30. The film 12 Years a Slave, released in 2014, was directed by Steve McQueen, and based on the 1853 slave narrative of Solomon Northup.


32. Ibid.

33. Piper, interview.


ADRIAN PIPER

UNITIES

DAVID PLATZKER
The Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin (APRA) maintains copious volumes of the artist’s earliest childhood drawings, produced in the early 1950s in her Washington Heights home and at New Lincoln School, which had campuses on Manhattan’s Upper West and Upper East Sides. At APRA, too, are notebooks from the 1960s documenting Piper’s time at New York’s School of Visual Arts (SVA), rooms of file cabinets containing writings and preparatory materials for individual works, and racks of videotapes and media works, in addition to storage for finished artworks, from her earliest to her most recent.

Spending time at APRA, studying Piper’s work in depth, one comes to see consistent themes. Race, gender, and xenophobia are the topics most frequently noted by scholars and critics, but while this trinity of systems is indeed the subject of much of Piper’s work between 1976 and 1996, it does not cover all of it. Another thread that winds and leads through her work from the mid-1960s to the present has been a rigorous commitment to and inquiry into the tenets and systems of Conceptual art.

Piper’s artistic strategies, graphic sensibility, and root precepts of production are those of a first-generation Conceptual artist who came of age in the mid-1960s. In the opening of her richly detailed 1974 narrative “Talking to Myself: The Ongoing Autobiography of an Art Object,” Piper concisely frames her organic shift from an illustrator with remarkable drafting skills to an artist whose vision and fertile ideas grounded her firmly in an emerging artistic movement:

In my second year at Visual Arts I had a teacher, Joseph Raffaele, who insisted that we go to approximately fifteen galleries every two weeks, and write about what we had seen... In that year I assimilated more, comprehended more, and produced more work than I had in all the previous years I had been working.

Having this experience solved a problem which had brought me to an impasse in my work... I had been totally committed to figurative art. But at the same time, I found myself interested in problems which had little to do with the content of particular work: problems which I later learned... to describe as e.g. illusionistic by non-perspectival space, colors versus form, the displacement of environmental space, etc... Being exposed to contemporary art, e.g. Frank Stella, Carl Andre, Tony Smith, Don Judd, Kenneth Noland, etc. gave me the formal tools—hard-edge and color field painting, minimal sculpture—with which to treat these ideas.

In addition, the work I saw demonstrated the possibility of posing entirely new problems as aesthetic concerns. I think the work of Sol LeWitt, especially his “46 Variations on Three Different Kinds of Cube” exhibit was the single most profound educational experience I had. This, plus reading his “Notes on Conceptual Art”... did far more for my artistic development than the previous eleven years I had spent drawing nudes. From this point on, I felt freed, not only from the technical and formal constraints of figurative art, but also from my preconceptions about what art had to be.

“Talking to Myself” introduces Piper’s late-adolescent years as an artist, starting in 1966, in an era that for her—as well as for the whole of conceptualism—was a critical nexus in the emergence of art that would break with the primacy of craft and the preciousness of execution and move toward one in which, as LeWitt asserted in “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art,” in 1967, “the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work.” In this declaration, LeWitt positioned himself, and a host of similarly engaged artists, as the progenitors of a cerebral art, one that eschewed using raw optical gratification as the principal method of determining the quality, and hence the inherent artistic and monetary value, of an artwork—an ethos that remains entirely present throughout Piper’s work, from the mid-1960s to today.

For Piper this contrast first materialized in a mind-body disjuncture that she had addressed in 1965 and 1966, even before arriving at SVA, in a series of paintings and drawings whose titles are all preceded by the abbreviation LSD. In an interview with the artist and historian Matteo Guarnaccia, in 2003, Piper recalled her experiences with the drug, which she used six times over a period of six months, during her immersion in the 1960s counterculture. She relayed to Guarnaccia how it changed her optical, spiritual, and intellectual perceptions, influencing her and her art at the time:

The paintings are very much about what it was like for me to go beyond the surfaces of things—to concentrate so intently on the fine detail and structure of a meditational object—on any object, really, any perceptual reality—that all of its surface sensory qualities, its conventional meanings and uses, its psychological associations and conceptual significance, all begin to move, breathe, vibrate, break up, and fall away. That’s when you start to realize how much of “ordinary” reality is nothing more than a subjective mental construct. When the surfaces of perceptual reality start to hum and crack open to reveal what lies beyond them, that’s where the deep insights live that are beyond words or concepts.

She continued, “[None] of them [the LSD works] were done during psychedelic experiences, although they were influenced by what I learned during them.” The majority of them are optically kaleidoscopic, corresponding to how the artist experienced the world while using the hallucinogen, although their subjects are indubitably not what she “saw”; rather, LSD acted as a tool for her understanding of alternative means of perception. Piper developed such learned experiences into a formal approach to systematizing otherwise indiscernible perspectives of the world in her art. At the same time she found nonchemical means of expanding her mind and body, by exploring transcendental realities through study of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, and the Yoga Sutra, and intensive practices in meditation and yoga, both of which have remained lifelong passions. Subsequent paintings such as LSD Womb (page 99), LSD Bloodstream (page 102), and LSD Abstraction (all 1965) feature hypnotic swirling patterns overlaying paisley-shaped and stained glass-like abstractions, a style also prevalent then in the brightly colored and high-contrast concert posters designed by the San Francisco-based graphic artists Alton Kelley, Rick Griffin, Wes Wilson, and Stanley Mouse, as well as Victor Moscoso, a former student of Josef Albers at Yale University.
This chapter in Piper’s career was not limited to LSD-inspired abstraction; she often incorporated the human form in myriad ways as both compositional and graphic tools, using her own body in self-portraits such as LSD Mirror Self-Portrait (1965) (page 95), Negative Self-Portrait (1966) (page 97), and LSD Self-Portrait from the Inside Out (1966) (page 97). In the first, drawn in graphite, Piper appears behind a piano stool in front of a mirror that we see only partly, suggested by its vertical sides and the curved lower edge of its frame. Her head, floating above the rendering of the stool, is the only visible part of her body. An unidentifiable draped object, perhaps a discarded sheet of paper, in the lower-right corner of the mirror adds another level of dimension to the image. A large, intricate paisley pattern, in shades of yellow, green, and ochre, swirls around Piper, partially covering the right side of her face; within the pattern one might see three small female heads almost entirely camouflaged by the swirls. The drawing has a surreal quality in the amorphous way that the picture plane is divided into five different depths presented by Piper’s head, the stool, the unidentified object, the frame of the mirror, and the wispy, smoky colors that unify these strata. Negative Self-Portrait—an inked image of the nude artist sitting in a windowlike frame—as well as the painting for which it was a study, LSD Self-Portrait from the Inside Out, similarly employ multiple levels of dimensionality. Both are reversed like a photographic negative, with the presence of light turned to darkness.

Other works in the sequence include a portrait of her boyfriend, Steve Shomstein, painted in a stained-glass style, depicting him as he would have appeared to a viewer under the effects of the drug, as well as LSD Self-Portrait with Tamiko (page 101), which includes her cat. As the series came to a close, in 1966, Piper completed a triptych of paintings called Alice in Wonderland, with its separate parts individually titled Alice Down the Rabbit Hole, The Mad Hatter’s Tea Party, and Alice and the Pack of Cards (figs. 1-3 and page 103). Their trippy narrative hews to that of Lewis Carroll’s fantastical mid-nineteenth-century children’s novel, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, which was popular in the counter-cultural environment of the 1960s for its suggestions of mind expansion and enlightenment achieved through drug use, and which found its way into the mainstream when the psychedelic rock band Jefferson Airplane performed “White Rabbit” on the television show TheSmothers Brothers Comedy Hour, in 1967.

Piper was not the only artist at SVA thinking about the dynamics of actualizing metaphysical conceptions into works of art. Her fellow students Joseph Kosuth and Christine Kozlov were also developing work that broke away from trying to approximate an idea or object on paper or canvas through the precision of rote craftsmanship. Mel Bochner, who was teaching art history at SVA at the time, was writing about and producing artwork that considered solipsism—“The theory, assumption, or belief: [a] That the self knows and can know nothing but its own modifications and states. [b] That the self is the only existent thing, or, inaccurately, that all reality is subjective”—as a means of realizing art objects that defined the intersection of the rationality of time and space and our limited capacity to recognize nonmaterial subjective concepts. Piper would later delve far more deeply into solipsism in her work and writing. In “Moving from Solipsism to Self-Consciousness,” written in September 1972 while studying philosophy at City College of New York, she concludes,

The problem has become that of the balance between self and other within a single—my own—consciousness. Formerly the problem was that of solipsism, i.e. the balance between my own consciousness and a problematic external world. That seems to have resolved itself by the possibility of assimilating as much of that external world, as other, into my sense of myself. The more I assimilate, the more easily I am able to see myself as “an object in the world among others.”

This heady thinking would become increasingly apparent in Piper’s subsequent works, in particular with her performative pieces, but this theoretical position was already beginning to form in Piper’s earliest moments at SVA in the mid-1960s.

Closely following her LSD drawings and paintings was a set of thirty-five ink-and-pencil drawings titled The Barbie Doll Drawings (1967) (pages 108-10), which deftly combine three-dimensional structures in space with episodic time frames. The sequence, excised from one of Piper’s many spiral-bound sketchbooks from the 1960s, is viscerally charged by its conflicting subjective and objective propositions. In precisely rendered fine lines, the drawings depict what appear to be awkwardly reassembled doll parts, sometimes with heads and body parts tied like balloons and occasionally floating over crevasses, accompanied by grotesque puppet heads and disembodied limbs. But it is entirely possible to recognize the carefully executed amalgams not simply as haphazard assemblages of doll parts, but as discrete, finely tuned compositional structures. This becomes more apparent toward the end of the series, when the disembodied parts begin to align intellectually and morph visually into what would be Piper’s earliest Minimalist sculptures. And the series has an undeniable and overt sense of humor, if a rather grim one, although as in other of Piper’s works, it is often obscured by the gravity of the immediate subject matter or the critical context.

The Barbie Doll Drawings were created at a moment of the artist’s general shift from object to idea. The individual drawings in the sequence are both what they seem to be—works about gender—and what they seem not to be—pure, system-based Conceptual works, utilizing a fixed set of iconicographic materials familiar to viewers permuted in combinations with no two results being wholly alike. A number of paintings, including Self-Portrait at Age 5 with Doll (page 106) and Barbara Epstein with Doll (page 107) (both 1966), incorporated actual dolls, which function as dimensional objects that project off the flat picture plane and out into space. These are precursors of works that express dimensionality, as is Untitled Planes Painting (1966) (page 105), which achieved a similar effect by forwarding and recessing three male heads, this time painted on separate canvases in unaligned planes, such that the heads hover like faces in a crowd, each in its own physical universe.

The approach of producing a sequence of works anchored in a basic idea or set of parameters in a multitude of permutations remained a principal one for Piper. Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words (pages 112-27), a sequence of more than fifty individual works, demonstrates her turn from objective representation toward permutations of color, materiality,
surface, texture, and spatial relationships, all within the fixed area of a standard 8½ by 11-inch sheet of paper. The contrasts between The Barbie Doll Drawings and Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words—figuration versus abstraction, line drawing versus collage, shading, and contours—are formal distinctions; what remains absolutely consistent, however, is how riotously inventive both series are in exploring a system and the extent to which comprehension relies on a viewer’s immediate recognition of its units, and Piper’s play in developing nonrepeating structures using them. Similarly, the creation of a new element in a series relies on the logical reimagining of a preceding element, so that the result is an expanded object with qualities inherited from a predecessor—not unlike genetic code passed from generation to generation, acquiring new traits through the injection of new code, mutating through happenstance and age. Among the individual drawings in Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words, and even in a single sheet, it is immediately clear that Piper is exploring how three dimensions can be materialized from a standard two-dimensional space using only collage, perspectival techniques, and subtle coloring but eschewing other facilities for the representational rendering of objects, thus, in a way, producing The Barbie Doll Drawings but without dolls, floating heads, or geometric structures found in our observable world.

**Conceptualism, Beyond the Confin es of a Picture Plane**

Piper’s pursuit of ways to visually define conceptual space was not limited to works on paper. In 1967 and 1968 she began to produce paintings and sculptures that took this exploration further, starting with works such as Untitled Planes Painting and the wall- and floor-based sculptures Double Recess (page 129), Protruded Rectangle Canvas, and Recessed Square (page 126), all three from 1967. In contrast to the purity of Donald Judd’s declaration that “a work needs only to be interesting,” John McCracken’s cool, fetishized execution, Carl Andre’s unadorned materiality, and Robert Smithson’s serial translations of mathematical and organic geometries into sculpture, Piper pursued an art that could express or actualize an ideal, something more infinite than what it is possible to manifest in a single, hermetically constrained art object. Nine-Part Floating Square (1967) (page 131), like some of her earlier works, operates formally as a study of linkages between a work’s physicality and its levels of not just physical but indeed conceptual depth. Objectively described, it comprises nine 18 by 18-inch (45.7 by 45.7-cm) canvases, each additionally divided by light pencil lines into nine 6 by 6-inch (15.2 by 15.2-cm) squares. A light gesso square of 36 by 36 inches (91.4 by 91.4 cm) is painted across the nine panels, not quite in the center but rather offset by six inches at the top and six inches at the right. The nine canvases are installed in three rows of three, separated by six inches, with a ruled grid penciled directly on the wall such that it precisely joins the penciled grids on the canvases.

As a study of the intersection of an ideal’s recognition—the intellectualized ideal of joined elevations—with the realization of a three-dimensional artwork that demonstrates it, Nine-Part Floating Square manifests ideas Piper was working out in her early writing:
I believe very strongly in the necessity of the physical realization of an idea: First, I am convinced that the final, concretized form of an idea is the true existence, in that it is then subject only to the physical laws of the deterioration of the material form and no longer the inevitable inconsistencies and fluctuations of the only-human artistic mind; second, if there exists any ultimately objective reality of an art at all (and I can't give any opinion as to whether there does or not), I'm sure it can exist only as a total additive vision in which everyone participates, and towards this end there must necessarily be a physical form that everyone can perceive and formulate a vision of.\(^{11}\)

Piper thus formulated her exploration of dimensionality, using artistic tools to reason her way toward the fabrication of abstract objects. As the *Drawings about Paper, Writings about Words* works reveal in their similarities with and contrasts to *The Barbie Doll Drawings, Nine-Part Floating Square* shares and builds on what germinated in *Untitled Planes Painting*. Both sets of works conjure infrastructures that postulate a transparent analogue between defining space in a tactile manner and defining it against intellectual constructs.

Piper's interest in LeWitt's writing, which she first encountered in 1967, would seem to suggest that when she made *Nine-Part Floating Square* she was familiar with his wall drawings and temporal installations. But it wasn't until 1968 that LeWitt developed his instruction-based art, in *Wall Drawing 1: Drawing Series II 18 (A & B)*, placing Piper very much in the vanguard of such work. The relationship of LeWitt's writing to his actualized artwork inspired a host of artists, including Piper, who recognized his thinking—and vocabulary—as critical to the development of their skills of exposition and artistic output. In February 1968 Piper saw LeWitt's *46 Three-Part Variations on 3 Different Kinds of Cubes* at Dwan Gallery, in New York. The exhibition featured forty-six white-painted rectangular aluminum structures, each one built out of three stacked cubic units—different combinations of solid cubes, cubes with one side removed, or cubes with two parallel sides removed—following a logical progression such that no two structures were identical. The work's title, like those of Piper's previous works and ones that would follow, articulates the totality of the program that realizes and makes the work concrete. That is, the title of the object defines the object, and the object memorializes its title. Piper continued to develop her ideas about planned serial progressions throughout 1968, in works such as *Sixteen Permutations of a Planar Analysis of a Square* (pages 136, 137), which paired a diagram showing all the possible permutations of the interior divisions of a square with a sculptural realization of one of those permutations, as well as *A Three-Dimensional Representation of Infinite Divisibility*, (page 132) with its floor-based sculptural companion, *Infinitely Divisible Floor Construction* (page 133), each one a clearly constructed demonstration of a logical translation of geometric systems.

A wry sense of humor makes an occasional appearance in Piper's work, sometimes yielding a sliver of information about her personal life, although never straying from her systematic conceptualist mandate. *Meat into Meat* (1968) ([pages 142, 143](#)), originally titled *Five Unrelated Time Pieces*, is a vivid merging of time-based art with Piper's growing political awareness and interpersonal relationships, staged as a private performance over three days, from October 11 to October 13.\(^{12}\) Its narrative, recorded on a typewritten sheet of paper and in eight color snapshots, taken by Piper, concerns a pound of packaged ground beef shown on a dinning table at 3:15 p.m. on Friday; as four raw hamburger patties on a plate at 11:35 a.m. on Saturday; and frying in a pan on Saturday at 11:48 a.m.; followed by four images of David Rosner, her boyfriend at the time, wearing a white shirt with rolled-up sleeves and red tie while consuming the meat over a duration of six minutes.\(^{13}\)

In contrast to the many dry, frequently pseudoscientific conceptualist works being made at the time by male artists, *Meat into Meat* treats the female labor of preparing a meal for a boyfriend as a pointed, sinisterly comical slaying of time-based art: the parlaying of mundane activities—cooking and eating—into work that devours preconceptions about how art should formally manifest and palpably address its subject matter objectively. Piper would later describe the work with a flourish:

I thought I was performing an abstract metaphysical investigation into the nature of space and time, but the subtext was my relationship with David. David was a good Marxist and a very committed political person and I was starting to get interested in feminism, going to my first consciousness-raising groups, doing yoga and this weirdo art, and being a vegetarian. Although David was always helping me do my work, there was always this running commentary about all this weirdo stuff and what did it mean and it was all silly to do it. So, in this piece in particular, I retaliated with my own running commentary about what it meant to be on the one hand a committed Marxist and on the other hand to be consuming enough meat to feed a small third-world country for a month.\(^{14}\)

A set of color photocopies of the *Meat into Meat* photographs in the Adrian Piper Research Archive, in Berlin, is accompanied by a typewritten label that gives the work additional context:

_found private confrontational performance [see Five Unrelated Time Pieces]_
A. Piper, D. Rosner, 1 lb. hamburger.
Topic: Marxism vs. vegetarianism

The orderly serial progression of *Meat into Meat* clearly fits in the same vein as Piper's prior systematic works: taking a singular idea and developing it in stages toward a conclusion, while allowing the internal permutations of the work to be exposed, step-by-step, from the conception—here, elements of interpersonal relationships and philosophical differences (as expressed by the obvious annoyance on Rosner's face and Piper's revealing of the flaws in his intellectual underpinnings). Piper later recognized *Meat into Meat* to be her first performance work, preceding those that would extend into the video works and meta-performances of the 1980s onward.\(^{15}\)

**Demonstrating Hypothesis**

For the Hypothesis series, a body of work executed between 1968 and 1970, Piper relied on the same continuous temporal progression that was the foundation of *Meat into Meat*, using photography to document, preserve, and slice up time—all
Hypothesis: Situation #10. 1968-69
Typescript on mimeographed paper; gelatin silver prints and ink on graph paper; and two photolithograph pages 11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); 11 x 17¼ in. (27.9 x 43.6 cm); and each 11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
actions inherent in a medium that captures an image in a fraction of a second.

Each work in the series is presented as three panels in simple frames, with one of the panels always containing a pair of text pages that lays out the series’ fixed parameters. The remaining two panels contain a set of photographs mounted horizontally on a long piece of graph paper and a single typewritten index of the photographs, with descriptive text and time references. In these works Piper makes visible how a time continuum and space continuum can operate in simultaneity. The artist’s subjectivity is also situated within this schema, albeit far more subtly. Hypothesis Situation #10 (1968) (fig. 4), as an exemplar of the series, surveys a one-minute-long television commercial for Bufferin pain medication, which Piper indexed with five black-and-white stills taken successively, the first at 9:15:09 p.m., and then the following four shot at random over the next fifty-one seconds. With the snapshots arranged and mounted sequentially along the bottom of the horizontal graph paper, Piper drew, in black ink, a single horizontal axis, labeling it “space continuum,” and an intersecting perpendicular vertical axis for the “time continuum,” a format she repeated in each Hypothesis work. In Hypothesis Situation #10 an additional set of two vertical lines are labeled “television screen” and “Bufferin commercial,” and a single horizontal line, scaling time as 1/60 of an inch per second, documents the moment that Piper pressed the camera’s shutter. Along that line, descending from each of the five points marking the snapshots’ times, are short lines that contain the advertisement’s audio from those synchonic moments against Piper’s diagrammatic charting and inlaid video stills:

“If you had taken Bufferin . . .
“... just two tablets . . .”
“... fast-acting Bufferin . . .”
“Doctors specify Bufferin most.”
“... on your way to relief . . .”

Also descending from these five points are five diagonal rules that connect the time to the corresponding photographs: a woman, hand against her head, apparently suffering from a headache, at “:09,” a hand holding a Bufferin tablet; a Bufferin bottle; the words “Doctors specify Bufferin most,” and, in the final frame, the woman from the first image, now looking less aggrieved, at “:60,” showing how quickly she has been relieved of her pain. The nineteen works in the Hypothesis series all involve Piper’s authenticating her personal surroundings in this way, with the camera’s lens, and by extension, verifying her own body “as equally a concrete physical object that could refer to itself as well as to other objects, and . . . finding the points of similarity and difference . . . What I did was to document the contents of my consciousness at specific time intervals as the particular feature that distinguished me from other objects in the world.”

In the Hypothesis works Piper parses what would otherwise be inconsequential punctuations in time and memorializes them as frames in a single work: significant, but only appreciable as parts of something larger. If a single photographic snapshot were removed from its context, it would lose its structural relevance and become nothing more than a forgotten slice of time. By contrast, when set according to Piper’s rules, as laid out in the text panel that accompanies each work in the series, the photographs reveal the unity and logic of the way she uses the camera to place herself in the position of an introspective observer: indexing the codifications of the world around her—he be they cityscapes, her apartment, or images on a television screen—and essentially documenting her relationship to the physicality of the material world against the unceasing linearity of the passage of time. Piper noted the importance of the series, saying it was “‘the crucial link between the earlier conceptual work and the later, more political work I did having to do with race and gender objectification, otherness, identity, and xenophobia.”

The Hypothesis series can be thematically coupled with the singular portfolio Here and Now (1968) (figs. 5, 6 and page 135), a set of sixty-four unbound sheets. Here and Now merges the precept raised in Nine-Part Floating Square—a grid that lends substance to an abstraction more comprehensible through science and philosophy than art—with the temporal element of the Hypothesis series. What’s new here is how time is linked to the grid without any associated reference points, either figurative or photographic: each moment is set in individual 1-inch squares within a grid of sixty-four, over the course of sixty-four mimeographed sheets. Piper devised an utterly simple—but by no means obvious—way to accentuate the paradox of the movement of time tied to a specific unchanging place, by having each page’s single occupied square contain typewritten text defining its precise location. A text on the title page reads “not here,” and, as Piper explained in “Xenophobia and the Indexical Present II: Lecture,” of 1992, “The reason is because the text on the page does not refer to its own location, to its own position in space and time. It refers to the person who did the project, namely me, and to the time when it was done, namely November 1968.” On the first interior page, within the first square of the sixty-four-square grid, a text reads,

HERE: the square
in top row, right:
t corner of page.

Variations on this text appear, page by page, square by square, from right to left on each line of the grid:

HERE: the square
in 3rd row from top, 4th
from right side.
This continues until the sixty-fourth square on the sixty-fourth page, which concludes,

HERE: the square
in bottom row, left corner
of page.
Through this block-by-block narrative, *Here and Now* systemizes a temporal presence, as the reader moves laterally from page to page, at the same time quantifying the nonpresence—the dematerialization of the nonobject—of the artist, who has, in a previous place and time, used signifiers of language against a defined location in space. The stacked pages can be understood as a demonstration of time rendered against location at any point along a timeline, of any given moment being here and now.\(^{21}\) Seriation #1: Lecture and Seriation #2: Now, two sound works from 1968, present aural complements to this idea, by substituting the sound of language for physical work. In the former, Piper used a rotary telephone to call for the time—an automated service that announced the time of day in ten-second intervals—and recorded twenty-nine minutes and seventeen seconds of the female voice reciting the hours and minutes; the effect of the work is a perceptual shift for the listener, who inhabits a time nonsynchronic with the recording. In the latter, Piper declaims the word “now,” drawing it out in progressively shorter intervals, from a minute to a second, over the course of seventeen minutes and thirty-six seconds, in a further, and more ethereal, distillation of the concept.\(^{20}\)

**Beyond Constraints**

Throughout 1969 and after graduating from SVA that year, Piper sought new avenues and mediums for her ideas, two of which were artists’ books and ephemeral works. These seem a natural extension of her new consideration of the location of time as a fourth dimension. The utility of inexpensive, easy-to-disseminate work was particularly well suited to page-by-page serial narrative constructions, and added a layer of transparency to the notion of “reading” art. Although many artists were producing books or projects for publication at that time (including John Baldessari, Robert Barry, Bochner, Stanley Brouwn, James Lee Byars, Hanne Darboven, Peter Downsborough, Gilbert & George, Dan Graham, Kosuth, LeWitt, Lucy Lippard, Ed Ruscha, Smithson, Athena Tacha, and Lawrence Weiner), one of the medium’s key figures was not an artist but the dealer Seth Siegelaub. Siegelaub, through the books he published, made the argument that the book format was the natural evolution of the dematerialized artwork and an appropriate conceptual alternative to physical gallery spaces—the artist’s book wasn’t just a book: it was an exhibition venue.

Piper’s contact with Siegelaub came about not through publishing with him but by working as a receptionist and administrative assistant in his gallery, at 44 East Fifty-second Street, in New York, during the exhibition *January 5–31, 1969* (also known as the *January Show*) (fig. 7).\(^{21}\) From that vantage point she frequently interacted with the artists in the exhibition—Barry, Douglas Huebler, Kosuth, and Weiner, most of whom she had previously known—and encountered a broad spectrum of visitors. Piper’s role there was largely invisible, as the archetypal girl at the front desk, rather than that of an artistic peer making work that directly corresponded with, and even surpassed, that of the men being exhibited.\(^{22}\)

Piper was never included in any of Siegelaub’s exhibitions.\(^{23}\) In fact, only a single woman, Kozlov, appeared in any of his conceptualist exhibitions, contributing a single page to the *March 1969* publication.\(^{24}\) While working for him, however, Piper’s first two publication projects were published in

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**Fig 5, 6.**

*Here and Now.* 1968

Cardboard portfolio with text on graph paper and text on mimeographed paper taped to box; and text on sixty-four loose sheets of mimeographed paper

Each sheet 9 × 9 in. (22.9 × 22.9 cm)

Collection Alan Cravitz and Shashi Caudill

Details:

- page 43
- page 20
the fifth issue of *0 TO 9*, a journal begun by Vito Acconci and Bernadette Mayer in April 1967. Her connection to the journal was through Rosemary Mayer, Piper’s fellow student at SVA, Acconci’s wife at the time, and the sister of Bernadette. *0 TO 9* was launched as a mimeographed and stapled edited selection of poems by, for the most part, emerging authors. By the fifth issue Acconci and Mayer had taken a more expansive editorial stance: to reflect the intersections of literature, theory, and text-based art, they invited visual artists—some of whom, such as LeWitt and Smithson, were contributors to Siegelaub’s publications—to submit pageworks. In addition to Piper’s works, there were contributions from Richard Johnny John and Jerome Rothenberg, Smithson, John Perreault, Yvonne Rainer, Bernadette Mayer, Clark Coolidge, Acconci, Hannah Weiner, Les Levine, Eduardo Costa, Kenneth Koch, Philip Corner, Jack Anderson, Rosemary Mayer, and John Inslee.

One of Piper’s pageworks, which she would later title *Untitled* (*"If you are a slow reader . . ."") (page 157), is an expression of the intellectual meeting point of text composition, reader comprehension, and the passage of time. Its first two sentences, each constituting a whole paragraph, declare how long it takes to read them: a slow reader will need approximately five seconds to read the first, quite simple sentence, of seventeen words, and a fast reader will need the same amount of time to read the second, more complex sentence, of thirty-nine words. The final sentence and paragraph of the work adds a mathematical problem to the question of how long it takes to be read. Beyond its droll humor, which is found in many of Piper’s text-based works of that period, *Untitled* (*"If you are a slow reader . . ."") pushes at time’s boundaries, at the difference between the way it is fixed, like a clock or a metronome, and the way individuals operate within it and perceive its progression, in a similar manner to the *Hypothesis* works but with the mapping of sequential photographs swapped out for a block of text. In both, the structural components mark a system for testing the constraints of understanding the relationship between seeing information and experiencing it. The harmony of this work would not have been missed by those engaged in the temporal process of reading it in a literary journal.

*0 TO 9*’s sixth and final issue, published in July 1969, was something of an extravaganza, with contributions by Jasper Johns, Rainer, Alan Sondheim, Lee Lozano, Lawrence Weiner, Bernar Venet, Barry, Graham, Corner, John Giorno, Huebler, Perreault, Smithson, Karen Piraps-Hvarre, Michael Heizer, Coolidge, Nels Richardson, Larry Fagin, Rosemary Mayer, Bern Porter, Hannah Weiner, and LeWitt, in addition to those of Acconci, Bernadette Mayer, and Piper, all of whom would soon be recognized as significant visual artists and poets of the era. Piper contributed two pieces to this issue, neither of which were announced by a title on the magazine’s table of contents. *Street Works*, a supplement published as a coda to this final issue, contained documentation of artist-produced flyers, press releases, and handouts for a series of performances, organized by the artist Marjorie Strider and the poets Perreault and Hannah Weiner, that took place in Manhattan on March 15, 1969, April 18, 1969, and May 25, 1969. Each piece of ephemera in the volume represented the works of various artists and poets, but each date’s performances bore the same Manhattan locations and hours. *Street Works II*, for example, took place.
on April 18, 1969, on the sidewalks of the city block defined by Sixth and Fifth Avenues from Thirteenth to Fourteenth Streets, during the one-hour span between 5 and 6 p.m. On that cool spring evening Piper presented Untitled ("Street Works: Friday, April 18, 1969, 5-6 PM . . .") (page 169)—three proposals for actions printed on a flyer that she distributed among the crowd, along with ephemera materials by many of the other participating artists.

One week prior to the announced time of the performance, Piper spent two hours traversing the area where the events would take place, "recording whatever occurred" on a portable tape deck, carrying on conversations with Richard Van Buren, Edwin Ruda, and Acconci; with Acconci some of the chatter takes on "interpersonal overtones I was completely unaware of at the time."28 Returning to the same location the following week to perform in Street Works II, a one-hour series of events, Piper brought with her the same tape deck. Setting the speed to double, she played back the earlier recording while walking the same route, no doubt to an audience of confused passersby unable to garner much from its chipmunklike sounds mingling with the real-time street noises. The temporal displacement and confusion must have pleased Piper; it was very much the effect she was anticipating, as she herself noted in the recording, which she later issued as a nearly two-hour audio work, Streetwork Streettracks I-II (1969).29 Thus one work is transformed into another, with the removal of something specific from one moment, the transfer and compression of that thing exactly one week later, and the later re-revealing of it as a stand-alone audio work, freed from the constrained conditions of live playback. This elasticity of time and place, a work transported to another time in another place, removes it from the performative structure it was crafted for, so that it becomes both performance relic and work to engage with in the present: the experience of an artist discussing a work that does not yet fully exist. It is, in effect, a work documenting its own creation.

These organized street works can also be understood as extensions of both the Pop art Happenings of the earlier 1960s and the street protests taking place in New York and throughout the country during the 1968 elections, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Vietnam War. Whereas the Happenings usually took place in galleries and performance spaces, the street works were unconfined by physically walled-in spaces. Enacted in open environments, mingling with the natural flow of pedestrians, these performances created unlimited possibilities for happenstance; with the sidewalk as the stage and the city as backdrop, the inhabitants of New York became active participants, willingly or not.

Piper, Rosemary Mayer, and the poet Aram Saroyan would be the only three artists and writers other than Acconci and Bernadette Mayer to publish their own books under the 0 TO 9 imprint. Three Untitled Projects for 0 to 9: Some Areas in the New York Area (1969), a set of three untitled books intended as independent works, expands Piper’s inquiry into spatial relationships as fixed constructions defined by the limits of the human mind of Here and Now. The work was widely seen, thanks to Piper’s singular distribution of the books. The set of three volumes, packed in a manila envelope, was sent by mail—as an independent mail-art exhibition—to 162 artists, collectors, critics, curators, dealers, friends, writers, and others.30

The names and addresses of those being sent the books were indexed in two columns on both sides of a loose sheet of paper that was included in the envelope, with a red dot placed next to the recipient’s name on the list in the packet that he or she received: each one thus was designated as a location of the exhibition.31 Each of these four elements—the three books and the index of names—demonstrates a distinct means of documenting and naming locations. The first book records the locations found at the intersections of horizontal and vertical creases on a standard Hagstrom map of New York’s boroughs; the second book illustrates the area of a randomly chosen block of a map of Manhattan—the area between Second and Third Avenues bordered by East Forty-seventh and East Forty-eighth streets, identically marked in red ink in each copy—proportionally translated into increasingly smaller dimensions; the third book deconstructs four sheets of graph paper, using descending grid sizes and various measurements for the boxes on each of the four sheets (⅛ inch, 1 pica, ⅛ inch, and ten squares to 1 inch, plus an equation to show how the fixed gridded scales could theoretically be extended to larger dimensions); and the sheet of the recipients’ names and locations places the work in the here and now of the tangible world. The effect of the second book is not unlike that of Kees Boeke’s Cosmic View: The Universe in Forty Jumps, which in forty “jumps” take a reader from a woman sitting in a chair with a baby in her arms to outer space, 2 billion light years away.32 By putting the project directly in the hands of her influential intended recipients, Piper utilized one of the significant strengths of artists’ books, which is to extend works of art to people—domestically and internationally—who might not otherwise see the work in a gallery setting.

In the remaining months of 1969 and through 1970, Piper’s work was featured in some of the earliest and most important international exhibitions of Conceptual art, including Language III, at Dwan Gallery, New York; 557,087, organized by Lucy Lippard, at the Seattle Art Museum Pavilion; Konzeption/Conception: Dokumentation einer heutigen Kunstrichtung/Documentation of To-day’s Art Tendency, organized by Rolf Wedewer and Konrad Fischer, at Stadtisches Museum, Leverkusen, Germany; 555,000, Lippard’s expanded and updated version of her earlier exhibition, at Vancouver Art Gallery; Art in the Mind, organized by Athena Tacha Spear, at the Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Ohio; Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects, organized by Kosuth and Donald Karshan, at New York Cultural Center; and Information, Kynaston McShine’s curatorial opus, at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. In all of these shows Piper would be one of only a handful of women, the only African American, and, with only two exceptions in the Information exhibition, the youngest artist in each of the exhibitions.33

Almost all of these shows were accompanied by catalogues that provided the artists with pages to be used as additional project space. Concurrent with Number 7, at Paula Cooper Gallery (May 18–June 15, 1969), and Language III, at Dwan Gallery (May 24–June 18, 1969), Piper independently produced Untitled ("The area described by the periphery of this ad . . .")/Area Relocation Series #2 (page 171), a newspaper-page project that appeared on the Galleries page of the May 29 issue of
the Village Voice, alongside traditional advertisements for exhibitions at Leo Castelli, Paula Cooper, Judson, Howard Wise, and other galleries. Piper's artwork for the page—small, unadorned typewritten text held within the confines of a ruled rectangular box—read,

The area described by the periphery of this ad has been relocated from Sheridan Square New York, N.Y. to (your address). -area relocation #2
A. Piper

As an artwork hiding in plain sight, “the newspaper project” logically took Piper's concerns with relocations of space and applied them to a vastly larger venue, via the sheer scale of distribution of the Village Voice, whose weekly combined New York City, domestic, and international circulation of more than 130,000 copies constituted an audience vastly larger than a week's worth of regular gallery-goers or visitors to MoMA.34 While Piper was not the first to deploy mass-market periodicals as an alternative space to show artwork—Dan Graham and Stephen Kaltenbach had been among the pioneers of artworks crafted for advertising space, in 1968—her work appeared only shortly after theirs and proved just as adept in occupying its new environment, outside the narrow confines of the art world's well-demarcated spaces and limited (predominantly white, middle-class) audience, to reach those who would not travel in any case to see physical exhibitions.35

Defining Context
With her Context works, Piper made a significant shift, from the model of art made under the sole authorship of an artist for passive consumption by an audience to one of works that not only invited audience participation but demanded it, as an external means of creation. In the Context works, the actions of others lent the art its content and material substance, without any filter on the part of the artist. The works were operating, in fact, as living objects. Context #6 began its life as four pages in the Art in the Mind exhibition catalogue. The first page reads,

I AM COLLECTING INFORMATION

You are requested to

1) write, draw, or otherwise indicate any information suggested by the above statement on the following pages;

2) detach pages at perforation and mail to
Adrian Piper
117 Hester Street
New York, N.Y. 10002

The ensuing three leaves are labeled “context #6” at the top-left corner and have a line of faux perforations running down the left edge of each sheet. Thus, anyone willing to remove the pages from the publication would be directly collaborating with the artist to finish the piece, an action without which the work could not exist. In a vacuum, without such contingent participation, the work would not be activated, would not become an object responsive to its context.

Piper's contribution to the show perfectly mirrored Spear's original invitation to each participant:

In the last couple of years a new kind of art—“idea” art—has developed alongside painting and sculpture, we feel that the limitations of an exhibition [of painting and sculpture] prevent us from showing to our students an important part of the present art scene. The work of a great number of good young artists is no longer exhibitable. Therefore, we have decided to have an “imaginary” exhibition, Art in the Mind. A number of artists who are working in this new direction are being invited to send work which can adequately be described on typewriter size paper and xeroxed in any number of copies. The work could be grouped under such categories as these: conceptual art; language art; projects for street works; projects for ecological art; project for space art.36

In Context #7, for the Information show, Piper used a similar tactic, situating it as a dynamic, living, growing component of the exhibition. A text, mounted above a table where a three-ring binder filled with unprinted pages rested, read,

You (the viewer) are requested to write, draw, or otherwise indicate any response suggested by this situation (this statement, the blank notebook and pen, the museum context, your immediate state of mind, etc.) in the pages of this notebook beneath this sign.

The information entered in the notebook will not be altered or utilized in any way.

Set between an enlargement of Andy Warhol's infamous quote, published in the exhibition catalogue for his 1968 Moderna Museet show, “In the future everybody will be world famous for fifteen minutes” and a table holding Andre's Seven Books of Poetry (1969), Context #7 changed throughout the exhibition's eighty-day run (fig. 8).37 As suggested by the title, it was the context that gave shape to the work, as visitors added their multiplicity of responses. The lethal war in Vietnam, the invasion of Cambodia, President Richard Nixon, MoMA, music, drugs, sexuality, Information itself—whatever was pertinent to viewers as they encountered this work among the others in the exhibition—all came in for comment on the binder's accumulating pages, ultimately filling 1,903 pages in seven binders with critical, funny, heartfelt, profane, sarcastic, silly, and politically piercing responses, thus completing Piper's artwork (pages 176, 177). As an open and unfettered system for the contributions of viewers, Context #7, as well as the other Context works, differed substantially from projects that entailed artists soliciting, editing, and compiling works by other artists, such as Bochner's Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to Be Viewed as Art (1966) (fig. 9),
also presented in plain black three-ring binders, or, indeed, the staple-bound volumes of O TO 9.\(^{38}\) As works whose times and locations were the perpetual indexical present of each viewer, the Context series unmistakably shared elements with Piper’s preceding works; their substantial departure was the addition of active participation by viewers, each of whom recognizes their own present differently. The relaying of time and space, as reflected in Piper’s introductory text, is a particularly lucid demonstration of this ideal.

The politically charged atmosphere of 1970s New York did not escape Piper’s notice, but it was not only city and national politics that interested her; she was also involved with the Art Workers’ Coalition (AWC), which attempted to turn the attention of artists, cultural workers, and art institutions to the exclusionary practices of the art world. At protests at the city’s three major museums—MoMA, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art—and an “opening hearing,” held in the SVA auditorium on April 10, 1969, AWC members demanded the presence of people of color and women on boards of trustees, the ceding to artists of sacrosanct institutional control over the acquisition, display, and programming of art, and the elimination of paid admission. Every speech at the open hearing called for greater cooperation, responsibility, and transparency on the part of the museums.\(^{39}\) This broadest possible framing of an all-inclusive community of artists and cultural institutions—MoMA in particular—would be sustained explicitly by these actions.

In this period of increasing discord, Piper withdrew her work from Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects, at the New York Cultural Center, in August of that year. Instead, she produced a statement, multiple drafts of which are contained in Context #9, to draw attention to the conditions beyond the limited, hermetic framework of the art world:

The work originally intended for this space has been withdrawn. The decision to withdraw has been taken as a proactive measure against the increasingly pervasive conditions of fear. Rather than submit the work to the deadly and poisoning influence of these conditions, I submit its absence as evidence of the conditions other than those of peace, equality, truth, trust and freedom.

### The Artist’s Body in Public Spaces

In the spring of 1970 Piper made another paradigm shift, moving her practice off the static surface of sheets of paper and turning instead to performance, to identifying her body as a structural object among people, places, other objects, and the construct of time. The opportunity to actualize this shift was Hannah Weiner’s invitation to participate, along with thirteen other artists, in The Saturday Afternoon Show, an offshoot of the Street Works projects, this time held indoors at Max’s Kansas City, a popular art-world hangout, on May 2, 1970, between 2 and 3 p.m.\(^{40}\) Amid a cacophony of simultaneous performative works, Piper enacted Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City (pages 178, 179), a performance inspired conceptually by the Hypothesis works.\(^{41}\)

In a sequence of photographs taken that day by Rosemary Mayer, we see Piper wearing a blindfold, a nose clip, wadded earplugs, a pair of long gloves over the long sleeves of
a sweatshirt, and knee-high boots into which her pants are stuffed. She circulates through the restaurant, passing groups of men and women sitting at tables and at the bar, who watch her and the photographer—who should be considered part of the action—with confused expressions. Piper advances blindly through the narrow confines of the bar and walks unguided into a service area, past two racks of glassware. Mayer, the embodiment of the camera, trails alongside Piper, capturing thin slices of time, measured in fractions of a second during the one-hour performance. In a remarkable juxtaposition, two of the photographs show, in the background, an equally lonely and awkwardly sited artwork, Judd's first Progression work (fig. 10), mounted on one of the restaurant's walls.

Perreault wrote a lengthy account of the show in the Village Voice, taking note of both the successes and some of the amusing misfires:

As far as I can report it, what happened was this. Vito Acconci, formerly Vito Hannibal Acconci, sat in a booth and rubbed his arm for one hour, causing a large red blotch to appear, which incidentally although photographed on the hour has not yet healed (see page 19). The image generated by this activity was not without overt references to masturbation, a practice [formerly] thought to lead to moronism. . . . Eduardo Costa, who was absent because of illness, arranged for the notorious Mr. T. and a friend to have dinner at Max's, thus continuing his interest in socially useful art works. (A practice more artists should be engaged in.) Ira Joel Haber played the same record over and over again on the juke box: "Let's Spend the Night Together" by the [Rolling] Stones, altering the environment in a non-visual but clearly perceptible (audible) way. Deborah Hay drank one glass of red wine in slow motion for an entire hour. Stephen Kaltenbach and Frank Owen tried to set up a string of very bright lights, but their collaboration became a piece about fuses and fuse boxes because the lights kept blowing out all the fuses. Abraham Lubelski had himself and his wife and his two children filmed while eating dinner. Scott Burton did not do the brilliant work he had originally planned. Hannah Weiner read aloud the official instructions to waitresses at Max's. Paul Pechter installed one of his permanent installations by discreetly drilling a hole in the floor and then plugging it up with a piece of lead. Adrian Piper plugged her ears and nose and shielded her eyes and wandered around the place for an hour, bumping into people, being bumped into, and creating a startling image. (I thought that a good piece would be not to tell her when three o'clock finally arrived. Ira Joel Haber announced that he had turned Adrian Piper into an illustration because at one point when she was stumbling around—quite beautifully—the sound to her sight, via juke box, was the Who's "Touch Me" from "Tommy.")

Piper expressed to Mayer her frustrations with the event, which Mayer recorded in a postcard to her sister: "Adrian was blindfolded, nose & ear stoppered. But she wasn't happy bcs. she thought she didn't bump into enough people." "I didn't like the idea that most everyone seemed to have been sitting down watching the performance instead of milling around at Max's as they usually do," Piper told the curator and art historian John Bowles. "I remember feeling a bit frustrated that I'd designed the piece for a bar but unbeknownst to me the bar had turned
into a stage.”46 Because the performance took place on an early Saturday afternoon, in the lull between gallery hopping and that evening’s openings and parties, the images of that day’s performances reflect a lightly populated bar with viewers largely inattentive to the actions of The Saturday Afternoon Show happening around them.

A year before Gilbert & George would premiere The Singing Sculpture (fig. 11) in the United States, Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City anticipated the concerns about objectification and the nature of self that the British artists would flatfootedly put forward.47 Gilbert & George defined their unification as consisting of two people but a single artist, asking to be considered “living sculptures”—sculpture being, for them, the highest form of art. After her performance at Max’s Kansas City, Piper defined a starting place for her Catalysis works with characteristic clarity: “I was thinking here more and more about myself as a three-dimensional object, and I was interested in exploring the difference between human objects, that is, objects that have subjectivity, and other kinds of objects that do not, other kinds of nonsentient objects.”48 Thus, she brokers a contrast between the Judd on the wall and the Piper within the walls of the restaurant—or indeed the Piper in the broader indices of the tangible world. Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City can also be understood as a structured engagement with alienation from the artist’s surroundings. This, in turn, suggests an external realization of an interior experience: removing herself from all points of contact with her surroundings, while simultaneously walling off everyone around her from seeing her as unique living being rather than an object to be observed.

The title of Piper’s Catalysis works evokes the step in a scientific experiment when a chemical is added to a secondary body to bring about a complex physical reaction—the artist as the pinch of salt dropped in a pot of water on a stove to accelerate boiling: Piper, in these works, activating her body and personal space. In Catalysis III (August 1970) (page 180) she wore a hand-painted “WET PAINT” sign and clothing coated with sticky white paint to walk past throngs of shoppers on Fourteenth Street, provoking confused and chagrined stares from passersby, as seen in the photographs taken by Rosemary Mayer.49 The next catalytic situation was Catalysis IV (1970) (page 181), for which she “dressed very conservatively, but stuffed a large red bath towel into the sides of my mouth until my cheeks bulged to about twice their normal size, letting the rest of it hang down my front, and riding the bus, subway, and Empire State Building elevator.”50 In five photographs by Mayer, we see women surrounding Piper on a bus, averting their gaze from her. In only one frame does a fellow passenger look directly at Piper, with a somber and disdainful glare.

Part of Piper’s intent for the Catalysis works was to craft circumstances that would allow her to interact with the public without the public identifying the interaction as an artwork. If the patrons at Max’s Kansas City encountering The Saturday Afternoon Show were aware that what was happening around them was art—too aware, perhaps, to react or even notice—then moving out into a public sphere, away from such a knowing and jaded audience, had the potential to catalyze a greater reaction. There is no photographic documentation of Piper’s other Catalysis works, but they may have been even more provocative.

Perreault has described performances in which Piper would “appear in various bookstores smeared with smelly grease . . . sit in libraries with a concealed tape recording of consistent burping. I’m sure any man with male chauvinist pig designs on her would be repulsed as soon as he came within striking distance.”51 On the sidewalk or in a bus, bookstore, department store, or library, Piper sought out reactive environments and situations in which passersby would not recognize that they had become active participants in these performances, while Piper witnessed the results like a scientist watching the bubbles in a test tube. In the Catalysis works Piper recognized, as she had with her projects for publications, the restrictions of the gallery exhibition and of the art world, populated as it was by people in the know. That closed world created an echo chamber that constrained the possibilities for artistic engagement and experimentation, limiting them to what might be presented within a conceptualized art-world context, compared with the boundless access, experiences, and opportunities offered by performing in public.

Beyond making art on the graph paper–like grid of New York City streets, in the Catalysis works Piper, as the catalyst, created the conditions inhabited by an outcast or social pariah, thus compelling viewers to deal with their fear of an individual utterly unlike themselves, whatever their own gender or race. But Piper was also pushing against different boundaries, something more like those found in Michael Fried’s controversial essay “Art and Objecthood,” which had appeared in the Summer 1967 issue of Artforum.52 Fried argued that an individual’s reaction to Minimalism—to works of sculpture in particular—could only be subjective, because the work offers no discernable narrative qualities: “The answer I want to propose is this: the literalist espousal of objecthood amounts to nothing other than a plea for a new genre of theatre; and theatre is now the negation of art. Literalist sensibility is theatrical because, to begin with, it is concerned with the actual circumstances in which the beholder encounters literalist work.” In the Catalysis works Piper broke free of this quandary by activating the space around her, turning herself into the catalytic agent for the public to respond to, and superseding the dominance of Minimalist sculptural icons by inserting the human form as a theatrical object to be reconsidered.53 Fried postulates that viewers must project substance onto anti-illusionist objects—that is, to clothe artworks in a skin to give them meaning; Piper, in the Catalysis works, inanimate herself, changing her outward appearance in order to guise herself as a contrary object, a disruptive element onto which spectators could cast interpretations.

**Objecthood and Objectivity**

Piper’s exploration of other means of researching art and objecthood intensified in the summer of 1970. By herself, in her Hester Street loft, she was deeply engaged in a work of profound introspection that formed a diametric contrast with her very public Catalysis activities. In both Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece (1970) (pages 182–85) and Food for the Spirit (1971) (pages 186–93) she systematically deconstructed the study of her body as a material object, although she did so in ways that could not be actualized outside of these “private loft performances.” The works are different in format and presentation,
but for both of them Piper photographed herself in the same dark, static location, looking at herself head-on in a mirror while holding a Kodak Hawkeye Instamatic R4 camera. The camera was the performances’ only witness, recording the artist from her knees to just above her head, in various states of dress, from fully clothed to nude. When she first presented these works, in the Spring 1981 issue of *High Performance*, she titled the essay “Food for the Spirit July 1971,” but the four images published with it were drawn from *Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece.* What separates these two performances is a year, the different bodies of texts associated with each work, the different performances that occasioned and are documented in each, the different visual qualities of the images, the string suspending her camera in the former work but not in the latter, and the artist’s frame of mind as she produced each one.

In *Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece*, which began on June 1 and concluded on July 7, 1970, Piper recorded a series of neutral facts about her physical state over fifty-six sheets of graph paper. Each sheet that marks a day has a black-and-white photograph of the artist affixed to its top-right corner, a handwritten date above the image, and, in her neat handwriting, a single day’s documentary details, composed according to style guidelines on a fifty-seventh sheet, which bears the heading “Object Maintenance”:

Write everything I do. Temp & weight on rising & going to bed. Picture once a day.

No subject

One verb / sentence

No incoming information, environmental conditions, sensory input (saw, heard, smelled, touched, tasted)

Ate: O.K. Read: O.K.

Restrict content whenever possible.

By excluding all external conditions from her documentation, Piper recorded only objective truths. On June 1 she photographed herself wearing only underwear and a blank expression, and then proceeded to document what the object Adrian Piper had done that day, without subjectivity, thus divorcing her mind from her body:


When Piper made this stripped-down work, she was engrossed in her studies at the City College of New York, where she had been pursuing a degree in philosophy, with a minor in medieval and Renaissance musicology, since 1970. The work’s title makes clear that Piper was extending her *Concrete Infinity* works of 1968, including *Concrete Infinity 6-inch Square* [“This square should be read as a whole . . .”](page 153) and *Concrete 8-inch Square* [“The sides of this square measure 8” . . . ”](page 152), which both used pure language to self-referentially build the type-written form of the area defined by its own description, thus documenting itself “simultaneously to this abstract system.” Here she turned herself, a specific object, into part of a logical system in much the same way as in the *Concrete Infinity* works, with language and numerical measuring systems—by defining the contours of what an object is without providing the inner workings that take place behind the sheet of paper or the artist’s internal monologue. This, too, draws on the dichotomy between two states of being, as in Plato’s Allegory of the Cave: the idealized object is but a shadow made by the complex qualities that provide an actual object with material substance.

In the following year Piper’s philosophical work and personal artistic investigations into the nature of selfhood accelerated dramatically. Encouraged by her best friend, Phillip Zohn, Piper embarked on what would become an ongoing obsessive professional study of Immanuel Kant’s profound *Critique of Pure Reason*, the work that eventually led to her
doctorate in philosophy, at Harvard University, in 1981.\textsuperscript{57} It was this work, too, that in July 1971 led Piper back to the ideas she had explored in \textit{Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece}, this time in an even more austere format. Throughout that hot month, she became deeply and intensely engaged in \textit{Critique of Pure Reason}, losing herself in its complexities. She took breaks only for yoga or to leave her loft for groceries or meditative walks. She saw no friends during this time, and depended on juice and water alone for corporeal nourishment. As she slipped deeper into the book, Piper has recalled, "I thought I was losing my mind, in fact losing my sense of self completely."\textsuperscript{58}

\textit{Food for the Spirit} came into existence in this moment of crisis, in order to "anchor [herself] in the physical world."\textsuperscript{59} Over the course of the summer, in the same place in her loft where she had taken the photographs for \textit{Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece}, Piper photographed a sequence of fourteen black-and-white images showing herself, again, in various states of dress and undress. In each image, the bottom of the frame cuts across Piper's knees, and her head is set almost dead center, surrounded by shadowy details of the loft. A backlit window, with frosted safety glass and security bars, is clearly visible to the left of the artist in the first four images; in the rest of the sequence it fades in and out of the darkness, suggesting that the latter photographs were taken at night. In some of the better-lit images, we can make out a large metal bracket with a wire dangling from it, just to the right of the mirror at almost the same height as Piper's head. In only one image, the second in the sequence, which appears to be illuminated by a light near the ceiling and by daylight filtered through the window, is a fully packed bookshelf visible, reflected in the mirror behind Piper. In all of the images, as in \textit{Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece}, Piper's face in the mirror is emotionless, and her camera, held with both hands, is positioned at her torso's midpoint. Throughout the sequence, the photographs become incrementally darker and denser, pulling the artist into their shadowy depths. Space, time, and seriality are the overriding thematic thread, materialized as sequential self-documentation by images, in \textit{Food for the Spirit}, and in written record, in \textit{Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece}.

\textit{Food for the Spirit}'s first public presentation, in 1987, included the photographs, a black three-ring binder with pages torn from Piper's edition of Norman Kemp Smith's 1929 translation of the \textit{Critique of Pure Reason}, with her handwritten marginalia inscribed in ink, contained in plastic sleeves and 16 by 20-inch (40.6 by 50.8-cm) "photodocumentation for performance photograph," as well as commentary on the work that Piper had written and published in \textit{High Performance}. A set of smaller photographs, perhaps printed at a drugstore, are interspersed among the pages of Kant and commentary in the binder.\textsuperscript{60} (An audio tape, later recorded over and thus destroyed, was also part of the original work in which Piper recorded herself "repeating the passage in the \textit{Critique} that was currently driving me to self-transcendence.")\textsuperscript{61}

"I have always had a strong mystical streak," Piper wrote, in a text accompanying the work's first public exhibition, in 1987.\textsuperscript{62} Of her physical self becoming a kind of apparition in her own mind, she said, she believed she may have been "abdicating my individual self on every level, becoming Kant's analysis of Transcendental Unity of Apperception in the Synthesis of Appearances according to the Rules Given by the Understanding for Reflective Self-Consciousness."\textsuperscript{63} If in \textit{Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece} Piper was focused on strictly describing herself as a resolutely impersonal object, lacking internal dialogue processing the thoughts behind her physical actions, in \textit{Food for the Spirit} she turned her attention to the unity of her body and mind, with all that unity's inherent conflicts, which she sought to reconcile under the gaze of Kant.

\textbf{Deepening Contexts}

LeWitt lived a few floors below Piper, on Hester Street. He was twenty years and nine days older than Piper, but they were good friends, a relationship based on respect for each other's art, ideas, musical interests, and, no doubt, their fastidious Virgo personalities. In May 1969 Piper assisted with the execution of LeWitt's \textit{Wall Drawing 11}: A wall divided horizontally and vertically into four equal parts. Within each part, three of the four kinds of lines are superimposed.\textsuperscript{64} for Paula Cooper's \textit{Number 7} exhibition, and two additional drawings on large, white-painted aluminum boxes at Dwan Gallery in September of the same year.\textsuperscript{65}

Conceptual art was frequently chastised in the 1960s and '70s for what was perceived as a lack of humanistic interest, for the distillation of pure information into pseudoscience for misguided philosophical ends.\textsuperscript{66} The removal of the self from the art object was understood not just as a dematerialization of the materiality of art but also as a negation of the artist's hand and the human qualities of pure beauty, form, and substance that had traditionally been expected of an artwork. Even some of the artists included under the rubric of Conceptual art—both at the time and retrospectively—were critical of it, such as Lee Lozano, who in the first of her private diaries jotted down,

Kosuth's art it seems to me is more about words than it is about ideas. The words he picks have already been explored (e.g. "Abstract" (N.Y.C. Art), "Water," "Positive," "Negative" (science), or a quote directly from Warhol). The objects he hangs his words on are too close to paintings to be revolutionary. Aside from dumping the objects entirely, possibly the only interesting way he could go would be for him to find some brand new words, words that relate to the art of the future, or even to invent some words of his own.\textsuperscript{66}

Kosuth did not hesitate to praise the work of Piper and others for their "development in a purer form of 'conceptual art,'" while at the same time he called out artists such as Baldessari and Bochner, whose work did not align with his own ideals.\textsuperscript{67}

It would be myopic to say that the Conceptual artists sought to scrub their work of aesthetics and humanity, or to hew only to objective ideals of quality. The work of Piper, Acconci, Bas Jan Ader, Eleanor Antin, Hans Haacke, Huebler, Martha Rosler, and other first-generation conceptua lists recognized the interconnections between artist, objecthood, and the ingrained social contract, and considered them elemental material conditions in their practices.\textsuperscript{68}

In LeWitt's loft resided a sculptural object that resonated with his interest in the human body and systems. \textit{Muybridge I}
(Schematic Representation) (1964), a long rectangular black-painted wooden box could be mistaken for a Minimalist work, but for a power cord that dangled from where it was mounted on the wall with ten evenly spaced small holes drilled in its front. When the work was switched on, the holes revealed ten illuminated interior spaces, each one independently flashing at random, one second on and a quarter second off, flickering like the shutter of a movie projector. By putting an eye to each hole, a viewer could see that the work’s stark exterior belied what was inside: ten black-and-white photographs of a nude woman against a black background, appearing to walk closer to the viewer (or to the photographer, Barbara Brown, who shot the images of an anonymous model) with each successive viewing hole, from a substantial distance away to close enough that the frame is filled by the area surrounding the model’s belly button (fig. 12).

As is noted in the work’s title, LeWitt’s piece is an homage to Eadweard Muybridge, the British photographer who, in the 1870s, used multiple cameras to document human and animal locomotion, including similar series showing men and women walking. LeWitt later wrote,

The work of Eadweard Muybridge has had a great impact on my thinking. This piece was done after some years of thought and experimentation and was the source of much of the serial work. At this time there was a search for a more objective method of organization as a reaction against the idea that art was composed with great sensitivity by the artist throughout the production of the work. This reaction eventually led to a theory of art that offered the idea that the original conception (perhaps intuition) of the work of art was of primary importance; the work would be carried through without deviation. It proposed the notion of the artist as a thinker and originator of ideas rather than a craftsman.

Muybridge I (Schematic Representation) was one of LeWitt’s earliest pieces featuring modular, serial objects, a stepping stone toward 46 Three-Part Variations on 3 Different Kinds of Cubes.

Where LeWitt’s work is open to subjective readings—a reconfiguration of Muybridge images for new audiences, a prurient peep show—Food for the Spirit was conceived not for an audience but for the artist herself, and can be understood objectively, as a work reflecting Piper as she was at a fixed moment in time and space. While in Muybridge’s and LeWitt’s works the movement of time is based on or communicated by the forward motion of models over a few seconds, for Piper’s it is the variables of light that relay the passing of time.

What Do You Represent and How Do You Represent It?
From 1946 to 1961, periodicals such as P.M., Art News, and others ran a comic strip by Ad Reinhardt called “How to Look” (fig. 13). In a panel that appears in many of its iterations, a simply drawn man, wearing a hat, points at a rectangular abstract painting. To the right of his head, representing either his thoughts or voice, a text reads, “Ha ha what does this represent?” Directly below this, we see that the painting has sprouted legs, a scowling face, narrowed eyes, a comically large nose, and an arm and finger pointing back at the man with enough force to throw him off balance, sending his hat flying off his head. Shocked, he falls backward, as the painting responds, “What do you represent?”
From the LSD works, which transformed the possibility for transcendent experience into palpable, vivid drawings and paintings, to *Food for the Spirit*, which recognizes the image of the artist—not unlike Reinhardt's reactive painting—as a responsive object with a specific objective, the trajectory of Piper's work has been unwavering. Using systems, permutations within sequences, and rational, serial confrontations with the indexical present, Piper has incrementally and logically—and uniquely among her peers—advanced a holistic pattern of system-based art, intricately balancing, as she did with *The Barbie Doll Drawings*, what can be seen and knowingly categorized with the proposition that there also exists a plane that can only be understood through intuitive logic. *Meat into Meat* and the *Context* works deftly applied new gravity to this pattern by adding the agency of other parties, an element of controlled but ultimately unpredictable chance. With *Untitled Performance at Max's Kansas City* and then the Catalysis performances, Piper introduced herself as a specific object, to be considered rationally, as one would analyze a mathematical formula—as an integral, integrated, structural component in the artwork, rather than a person. Where *Concrete 8' Square* ["The sides of this square measure 8""] is comprehended through a set pattern of math and a vocabulary of definitional language, *Untitled Performance at Max's Kansas City* and the Catalysis works use photographic images to reflect the way time and space may be defined as durational units that can only exist within a fixed logical construct.

*Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece* and *Food for the Spirit* build from the same roots. In each, Piper materializes and forefronts herself, questioning the constraints of what can be ascertained through objective facts. From a more distant perspective, one pulled even farther from the vagaries and misinterpretations we bring to photographic images of people other than ourselves, she becomes an infinitely changeable variation on a cube, a catalyzing agent—an element of a larger system that comes into definition the farther back we step.

Like Reinhardt's angry painting, Piper's work inverts the role of the viewer from passive recipient to engaged participant. Using conceptualist tools as an extended arm and pointed finger, Piper tested the environment for the creation of work that went beyond the constraining conditions and traditional narratives of the art that had come before her, and in doing so she solidified a framework for the works that would follow.
1. When Adrian Piper first entered New Lincoln School, it was located at 31 West 110 Street. In 1966 the school’s lower division relocated to 6 East 82 Street.


4. LeWitt, “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art,” October 5, no. 10 (Summer 1967): 79–83. In a footnote to “My Art Education,” an essay from 1968, Piper takes issue with some of LeWitt’s precepts as expressed in his “Sentences on Conceptual Art”: “Although I concur with him in thinking that the form chosen should not be governed by one’s subjective tastes concerning what looks well,” I think also one’s decision as to form merits a great deal of consideration as to that form which most clearly realizes the original idea.” Piper, “My Art Education,” 1968, in Out of Order, Out of Sight, vol. 1, p. 432. See also Pipp, “Personal Chronology” on p. 315 of this volume.


6. Ibid.


9. It should be noted that the title of this work, The Barbie Doll Drawings, was not given by Piper but by one of her assistants, during cataloguing. This title misleads: the dolls depicted are not Barbie dolls but imagined dolls that do not at all resemble the Barbie line produced by Mattel. Piper did not title the drawings at the time of their execution.


14. In 1970 Seth Siegoff enlisted Lucy Lippard to organize a selection of the catalogue for an exhibition that took place solely within the pages of Studio magazine, and although Lippard did not include any women, David Antin, another curator of the project, drew in his wife, Eleanor Antin, as a contributor, and Hans Strelow’s selection included Hanne Darboven. Studio International 180, no. 924 (July–August 1970).

15. Seth could have made the decision alone about whether or not to include [me] in the March 1969 show rather than asking Barry, Huebler, Kosuth, and Weiner and accepting their no vote. But that’s how he chose to structure his organization.” Piper, conversation with the author, January 5, 2016.


19. It should be noted that the title of this work, The Barbie Doll Drawings, was not given by Piper but by one of her assistants, during cataloguing. This title misleads: the dolls depicted are not Barbie dolls but imagined dolls that do not at all resemble the Barbie line produced by Mattel. Piper did not title the drawings at the time of their execution.


23. Ibid.

24. Piper has referred to Here and Now as a book, although as a block of unbound leaves housed in a folio box, it is more like a portfolio. Piper, “Xenophobia and the Indexical Present II,” p. 239.

25. Ibid.

26. The fifth issue of 0 TO 9, published in January 1969, opened, on page 3, with LeWitt’s typographical festo “Sentences on Conceptual Art,” which proclaimed, in its first two lines, “1. Conceptual artists are mystics rather than rationalists. They leap to conclusions that logic cannot reach.” It was reprinted in Art-Language 1, no. 1 (March 1969): 13. The manuscript is now in MoMA’s collection.

27. Untitled (“If you are a slow reader, this essay was eventually stored in a binder with eighteen other Space-Time-Infinity works to constitute Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces.”


30. Piper, conversation with the author, October 20, 2017. A set of three videos was also sent to the School of Visual Arts, New York. 31. Many of the addresses were drawn from Siegelaub’s address book. The list included the artists Acconci, Darboven, Dan Flavin, Eva Hesse, Huebler, Kosuth, Barry, LeWitt, Walter De Maria, Brice Marden, Bruce Nauman, Claes Oldenburg, Allan Ruppersberg, Smithson, and Lawrence Weiner—many of whom Siegelaub had invited to participate in the publication cum exhibition March 1969; the curators William Agee, Lawrence Alloway, James Butler, Kynaston McShine, Harold Szeemann; the dealers Leo Castelli, Paula Cooper, Virginia Dwan, and Konrad Fischer; the critics and writers Gregory Battcock, David Bourdon, Lippard, Annette Michelson, and Barbara Rose; and Siegelaub’s collectors and business partners, in addition to Piper’s family and friends. Three Untitled Projects was also included in Number 7, at Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.

32. Kees Boeke, Cosmic View: The Universe in Forty Jumps (Scranton, Penn., John Day, 1957), Cosmic View was the basis of Charles and Ray Eames’s nine-minute film Powers of Ten and the Belgeive Scale of Things in the Universe (1977).

33. When 557,087 opened, Piper, at age twenty, was the youngest artist in the exhibition. She was also the youngest artist in Conception/ Conception, Art in the Mind, and Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects. The only artists in Information who were younger than Piper were Milenko Mananovic and David George Nee, members of the Slovenian collective OHO, both born in 1949.
Robert Mangold, Robert Moskovitz, Smithsonian, Kenney Snelson, and others.


40. The artists participating in The Saturday Afternoon Show were Accouci, Burton, Costa, Ira Joel Haber, Deborah Hay, Kaltenbach, Abe Labelski, Frank Owen, Paul Pechter, Perreault, Piper, Brigid Polk, Strider, and Hannah Weiner. Max’s Kansas City was located at 213 Park Avenue South.

41. Piper referred to the performance asUntitled Catastrophe for Max’s Kansas City, making it her first Catastrophe work. Piper, “Xenophobia and the Indexical Present II,” p. 282.

42. Rosemary Mayer’s photographs constitute the documentation of Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City, meaning that they are its residual evidence, standing in for the performative activity and becoming its lasting embodiment. Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City, as with many of the Happenings and performances of the 1960s, exists today through digital objects under the same, or similar, titles as the original live works.


46. Piper, in Bowles, Adrian Piper: Race, Gender, and Embodiment, p. 135.


50. Ibid., p. 45.


52. Michael Fried, “Art and Objecthood,” Artforum 5, no. 10 (Summer 1967): 12–23. The same issue contained LeWitt’s “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art” and Robert Morris’s third installment of “Notes on Sculpture.”


59. Ibid.


63. LeWitt did not eschew the idea of his works’ social engagement; he spoke of his wall works as being analogous to musical scores, in which he, in providing instructions, was as “a composer who writes out a musical score” for a pianist [whenever drafts Re inhardt’s text “There Is Just One Painting,” published in Artforum’s
WAKE UP AND GET DOWN

ADRIAN PIPER’S DIRECT ADDRESS

CORNELIA BUTLER
I listened to Aretha’s version of “Respect” until I had it completely memorized and could hear the entire song in my mind at will. Sometimes it “turned itself on” without my willing it. However, the piece was performed only at those times when I did will it. The piece consisted of my listening to the song in my mind and simultaneously dancing to it. I did a mixture of the Bugaloo, the Jerk, the Lindy, the Charleston, and the Twist, with a high degree of improvisation. I performed the piece while waiting on line at the bank, at a bus stop, and in the Public Library.

— Adrian Piper

Aretha Franklin’s anthem marked its fiftieth anniversary in 2017, a year of right-wing political revolution in the United States and around the world. The occasion of Adrian Piper’s fifty-year retrospective exhibition lands in the United States at a moment when the national conversation about race, identity, immigration, and the golden rule are singularly and urgently unfolding in real time, embroiled in a cultural mood and climate of fear that is being fed from the top ranks of the government. What is striking when considering Piper’s complex and uncompromising body of work over the course of her career is her devotion to a handful of ideas that remain as urgent and powerful now as they were in 1968, the year in which her work began to turn toward indexical public address. The strategies of directly addressing viewers in order to locate them in the her and now, rather than in the past or future, and employing a conceptual idiolect while also situating a deeply political and subjective response to the world are at the center of her practice and are essential to the ongoing impact, the contemporaneity, of her work. Piper has honed these strategies, in her art, writing, and life, for more than five decades.

Although Piper’s practice is fundamentally conceptual, hers is a visual language, using appropriated photographs, text, installation, video, and performance. In this merging of the conceptual and visual, her work, deploying a realism appropriated from current social and political discourses, confronts viewers with directness and clarity that is startling among contemporary artists. Her imagined audience is a responsible viewer, one who, in a place of civil discourse, meets her and is willing to engage. Piper laid out the ideal effect of her work as the Mythic Being on the streets of Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she was living at the time. That same year at Artists Space in New York, she presented Some Reflective Surfaces (fig. 1), a multilayered audience-oriented performance that included the song and featured a double-drag femme version of the artist’s Mythic Being persona—with chalk-white pancake makeup, pencil mustache, starred beauty mark, and reflective sunglasses—and presented this performance again in 1976 at the Whitney Museum of American Art. So the male persona was activated in a number of different guises. In a text about Aretha Franklin Catalysis and Some Reflective Surfaces, Piper recalls being interested in popular “disco” dance figures as a form of ritualized sexual and political confrontation: “This type of dance was capable of expressing a whole spectrum of feelings people have about their own bodies—all the more eloquently because the rhythms of disco music (which I define to include ... disco, funk, soul, Motown, salsa, and disco-jazz), while complex and densely textured, tend to be repetitive and to transform gradually, rather than being discontinuous and rhythmically simple like much rock music.”

In both performances of Some Reflective Surfaces the artist danced to “Respect” against a film, projected behind her, of her dancing to the same music on another occasion, with a group of fellow graduate students in the Harvard University philosophy department. The soundtrack also included a voiceover of Piper narrating an incident that took place during a period when, to support herself, she worked as a disco dancer in New York’s Ginza and Entre Nous nightclubs (thanks to a fake cabaret license). She describes collaborating with two other dancers to choreograph a routine to perform together, rather than improvising individually, thus granting them a collective power: objectified for the pleasure of others, the dancers transformed themselves into empowered bodies.

Social dancing, dancing in public, as a subject for art was for Piper a natural extension of this labor and of her thinking about the political potential of disco and funk: “To succeed in dancing to disco music, and to perform the full spectrum of figures and gestures that are part of that, is to express one’s sexuality, one’s separateness, one’s inner unity with one’s own body; and in a sexually repressive, WASP-dominated culture, this is to express defiance.” Much the way Franklin turned Otis Redding’s bluesy admonition, meant to coax a woman into sexy submission, into a feminist power ballad that has inspired people to dance and resist for fifty years, Piper’s narrative transforms the conditions of dancing as sexy objects into the performances of powerful subjects. And she deploys this story, in her characteristically precise language, to get her audience moving.

In these works, her first foray into the political potential of dance, Piper’s interpretation of “Respect,” her dance stylings, and her monologue posit labor and self-fashioning at the core of artistic identity: what does it mean to put your body on the line as a medium of economic exchange? How does a (woman) artist perform her identity, and for whom? Must she perform an identity in order to have one? Although aware of the issues of power at stake for her personally, as a woman and an artist of acknowledged African descent, Piper incites nothing less than consideration of the most basic questions of gender and biological identity. Mixing and sorting the vernaculars of embedded
Fig. 1

_Some Reflective Surfaces_. 1975-76

Documentation of the audience-oriented performance at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, February 28, 1976. Two gelatin silver prints and 16mm film transferred to video (color, sound), 00:15:27

Prints 19½ x 15 in. (49.5 x 38.1 cm) and 15 x 19½ in. (38.1 x 49.5 cm)

Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Detail: print #2
racism, xenophobia, and sexism, Piper re-presents the images we have of ourselves, leading us to ask how we see difference, how we understand and name ourselves and one another.

And, in the well-known words of Rodney King in the midst of the 1992 Los Angeles uprising, why can’t we all just get along?25

Just as her personal political polities were manifest in her commitment to the Civil Rights Movement in the early 1960s, Piper’s discovery, a decade later, of the collective power of dance put social engagement at the center of her practice. Using her body as a vehicle for disarming her public into direct engagement, Piper exploits its power—that of hers and of the viewer’s—as a locus for meaning. Participation, one of the primary legacies of first-generation political Conceptual art, is a means of both democratizing the meaning of art and giving agency to its audience; and Piper’s contribution to Information, organized by Kynaston McShine at The Museum of Modern Art in 1970, is another early work evidencing such an invitation, in the form of a set of empty notebooks in the gallery that viewers were encouraged to fill with whatever they liked (pages 176, 177).6 The notebooks predated the visitor books now found in most art galleries, and in 1970 they advanced a much more earnest attempt at engagement. The solicitation of opinion and its subsequent expression, something not usually encouraged within the hallowed context of an institution, extends a political laying of claims, an invitation to conversation, an empowering of the audience in a way then unprecedented.

The genealogy of Piper’s public engagement and indexical direct address extends back to her earliest conceptualist works, most explicitly in the text-based proposals of the Concrete Space-Time-Infinity pieces (1968–69). Reading, Piper shows, is a social act: the text is the vehicle for her voice, which activates the reader by heightening the self-awareness of mental activity. Many of her typewritten pageworks can be read as outer-directed assertions of fact, both personal and public. The Concrete Space-Time-Infinity works, among others, are objects that refer both to themselves and also, as Piper has said of the Hypothesis series (1968–70) (pages 144–47), “outward, to the world of abstract, symbolic meaning.”7 In the storage notebook entitled Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces, we find a statement by the artist about her work. Its title is Untitled Statement (“My present work is involved . . .”) (1968). This statement describes a transfer of action, through the act of reading, from the artist’s conception of the work to the viewer’s construction of its meaning:

My present work is involved with the general nature of time
and/or space. In any specific form, there is an infinite amount
of information that can be conveyed about it, and an infinite
number of permutations of it. These possibilities are obviously
suggested only by the structure of the language used in dealing
with or identifying its general character, and not through direct
perception. One could continue to supply verbal information
about it indefinitely. Therefore, it seems most logical to allow
the physical boundaries of the specific form used to limit how much
is stated about it. Another way of imposing limitations is to
have the person to whom I’m giving the piece arbitrarily decide
a) whether they want the piece to exist in time or space (thus
deciding the nature of the medium used); b) the number of units
of that medium they want the information carried to.8

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Fig. 2
Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces. 1968–69
Notebook with fifteen pageworks. Ring binder with nineteen pages
in plastic sleeves
Each page 11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm); binder 11½ x × 10½ x 1½ in.
(27.9 × 26.8 × 3.0 cm)
Detail: Untitled (“If you are a slow reader . . .”). 1968
Typescript page
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the
Museum der Moderne Salzburg
This statement refers to artworks Piper was producing during this period: single-page documents containing a performative potentiality—literally the possibility of movement of action or cognition from artist to viewer. These works form part of Conceptual art’s history of interpersonal engagement. Some of Piper’s texts are autological and take place in real time: “The time needed to read a line of print depends on the content and structure of the line” (page 158), and “If you are a slow reader it will take you five seconds to read this sentence” (fig. 2). The work presumes a reader, but its punctum lies in the indication, both modest and descriptive, of an action, the “maybe” of potential engagement and outcome. In the analog spirit of much early Conceptual art, the act of reading the text is intimate, but it is also conditional, based on the viewer’s choice whether or not to do it. In spite of the work’s ethical rigor and deadpan quality, there is also a sense of humor that has been largely eclipsed by the precision and seriousness of the voice. This humor is often clear in Piper’s critical writing about her own work but also breaks through and, especially in recent works, reaches a level of transcendence and joy.

By 1969, in works such as those collected in the storage notebook entitled Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces, the performative potential has moved beyond the limited conceptual field of the page, from the internal and self-referential act of reading, to the viewer’s immediate surroundings, external to the page. One of the nine pieces reads, “Proposal: to exhibit this piece whenever the opportunity presents itself” (page 168). And in April 1969, as part of Street Works, Piper outlined various ways for nine participants to move around four designated blocks in Manhattan—running, walking, riding a bicycle—recording the view from the midpoint of each block with a Polaroid camera (fig. 3). The participants would distribute the proposal—an open invitation to others to participate—on Fourteenth Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. Like her colleagues Vito Acconci and Robert Smithson, whose urban-mapping projects moved them out of the studio and into the public and even, in Smithson’s case, into the frontiers of New Jersey and, later, the American West, Piper, through these projects, located her body and those of others in the public sphere.

The trope of the directive or administrative was common among first-generation Conceptual artists, an impulse that extended, in part, from those artists’ desire to think about the nature and value of artistic labor. Piper’s friend and mentor Sol LeWitt, as well as many other artists with whose work Piper’s was shown, including Dan Graham, Lee Lozano, John Baldessari, and Mierle Ukeles, developed task-based strategies that adapted what the curator Helen Molesworth has called the “language and logic of work.” By contrast, Piper extended the conceptual framework of image and text by turning to aural methods of communication. In the Seriation sound works, of 1968, she signified the administrative with generic

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**Fig. 3**

*Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces. 1968-69*

Notebook with eight pageworks. Ring binder with twenty-nine sheets in plastic sleeves.

*Each page 11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); binder 11¾ x 10⅝ x 1⅞ in. (26.8 x 30 x 9.3 cm)*

*Detail: Untitled (“Street Works: Friday, April 18, 1969, 5-6 PM…”). 1969 Typescript page*

*Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg*
measurement of time, which we thus experience indexically. *Seriation #1*, as Piper has said, is “directed towards giving a direct experience of the duration of the half hour.” The work also slyly suggests the absurdity of confirming our faith in an absolute such as time by listening to a recorded voice marking its passing—an idea that now seems quaint and nearly unimaginable as well (though the speaking telephonic clock is still available). The recorded voice here is the medium but is not itself the message: Piper is not enamored of technology as an end in itself, and her work has remained staunchly low-tech, deploying whatever is most expedient—in this case to elicit what she refers to in another work as “tools for listening.”

In *Seriation #2: Now*, the here and now is accentuated by the artist’s intoning the word “now” between intervals of silence that diminish, according to a serial algorithmic function, from one minute to one second long, for a total of eighteen minutes. Piper has noted that some listeners have imparted a sexual meaning to the work, perhaps alluding to the slow crescendo of the “now.” Although she denies this was her intent, the intervals between the artist’s voice—the anticipation of its reappearance—do feel at least anxious, nearly excruciating. The systematic variation in intervals nevertheless prevents listeners from becoming accustomed to a pattern, lengthening their attention and testing the limits of what can be managed and comprehended; the elasticity of silence becomes a structural element through which meaning can be conveyed. This cadence of silence and speech is developed in other conversational works, such as *My Calling (Card) #1 and #2* (1986–90) and *Cornered* (1988), which will be discussed later in this essay, and in which direct address is punctuated by meaningful pauses filled with the potential of individual and political transformation. *Seriation #2: Now*, like *Seriation #1*, can also be understood in terms of trust and endurance: the listener, by participating, has to have faith in the gesture and its execution—in the artist who disappears and reappears, punctuating the stretches of silence with moments of rupture. Such trust is experienced differently now, in our digital age, but it continues to be a way of constituting community, an approach that returns later to those elements by situating the viewer’s subjectivity at the center of them. Sound, like video, for many Conceptual artists provided a cheap, easy way to communicate more broadly, and these time-based mediums could also be marshaled toward an aesthetics of boredom and monotony, such as Piper’s nascent consideration of what an audience would be able to endure.

**Politics and Conceptual Art**

Although it is common to ascribe political motivations to Conceptual works of the 1960s, Piper resists such claims for her early work. And, indeed, the typewritten pages and single-listener audio works, and the scope of activity they initiate, bespeak a certain insularity; they are modest in their reach, as though Piper sought not to change the world but to intervene one viewer/listener at a time. This one-on-one relationship with the viewer has continued throughout her career and into the present: a politics of engagement and transference of agency whose early roots are found in the *Catalysis* works and *Infiltration*, 6/71, an unrealized performance of 1971 (figs. 4, 5). On two pages of typed text Piper proposes the parameters of a “Week-Long Population Catalysis Designed for the Town of New Haven and About 100 Participants,” constituting interventions, or “alterations,” to be carried out by participants at locations of business and leisure (bus station, post office, art galleries, museums, public library, movie house, restaurant), ranging from the humorous to the ridiculous and absurd. They seem meant to initiate some response by disrupting the banality of the day: “Cheeks smeared with vaseline and stuffed to bursting with cloth; small harmonica held between teeth or lips, sounded breath expelled”; “Chew large wads of bubble gum; blow large bubbles, allowing them to adhere to face, neck, clothes”; “Marinate clothes thoroughly in 1) Gallo wine, or 2) Cheap perfume, or 3) Sour milk.” Piper extracts a high level of commitment from her participants, both deliberate viewers and unwitting passersby. *Infiltration*’s actions are exactly those that Piper had already executed in her solo *Catalysis* performances of 1970, some of which are documented in black-and-white photographs (pages 180, 181). The *Catalysis* works of 1970–73 marked a significant shift in Piper’s practice, as she distanced herself from making objects, interrogating that very process by deploying her body as an object. What appear to be Dada-like street actions—jarring and absurdist elements activated by the artist with the backdrop of an everyday place or situation—are in fact works executed with her body, as an alterable form, in close proximity to the body of the public. In 1971, thinking about how to use her body in order to get a response—as a kind of direct address—Piper wrote,

I can no longer see discrete forms or objects in art as viable reflections or expressions of what seems to me to be going on in this society: They refer back to conditions of separateness, order, exclusivity, and the stability of easily accepted functional identities that no longer exist. . . . Making artificial and nonfunctional plastic alterations in my own bodily presence of the same kind as those I formerly made on inanimate or nonart materials. Here the art-making process and end product has the immediacy of being in the same time and space continuum as the viewer.
Figs. 4, 5
_infiltration_, 6/71 (1971), from the notebook _Street Performance Proposals_. 1969–71
Carbon copies of two typescript pages on onionskin
Each 11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the
Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Although Piper had actively participated in the politics of the Vietnam War and Civil Rights Movement before 1970, she had not consciously brought them into her art. When, in an interview in 1972, the critic and curator Lucy Lippard proposed that the Catalysis works were politically motivated, Piper clearly said that they were not. Piper and Lippard, a leading curator and advocate of Conceptual art and one of Piper’s significant interlocutors, were both active in the Art Workers’ Coalition (AWC), which Piper joined in 1970; each was negotiating the relationship between their political and artistic lives. Lippard included Piper in 557,087; 955,000; and c. 7,500, three of her groundbreaking “numbers exhibitions” of Conceptual art, organized between 1969 and 1974; the exhibition names refer to the populations of the cities in which they took place (in this case, Seattle, Vancouver, and Valencia, California). The last of the three was the only exhibition comprising work by all women artists—Lippard’s riposte to the commonly held notion that women did not make Conceptual art. Lippard’s focus had turned toward feminism in 1970, when she began to ask how the very parameters and definition of Conceptual art might be opened up through the practices of artists such as Piper, who had introduced subjectivity and the social into the narrowly defined range of strategies and aesthetics.

In 1969, the year before the Catalysis works, Lippard invited Piper to participate in two exhibitions. The first, in May of that year, was Number 7, at Paula Cooper Gallery, organized in support of the AWC and framed as an exhibition not against the war but rather in favor of peace—with its austere Minimalist aesthetic intended as a salvo against the overt and conventionally figurative nature of the era’s protest art. LeWitt made his first wall drawing for this exhibition, and Piper has credited him with initially suggesting her work to Lippard.

The second exhibition, in November, was Groups, at the School of Visual Arts Gallery, in New York. Piper was the only woman artist in a group show of her peers, including Robert Barry, Jonathan Borofsky, Steve Gianakos, Douglas Huebler, and Alex Katz. Each artist was asked to photograph a group or groups of people, known to the artist or not, every day for a week. Published later in Studio International magazine, with both the instructional text and each artist’s results, Groups can be understood as an attempt to make an archive of the public through the photographic document. Piper’s work, a set of seven Polaroid photographs of friends in her loft, represents one of her earliest forays into photography. The texts that accompany them describe the materiality and content of the images in strictly formal and objectively measurable terms: the physical dimensions of the “object” (the snapshot itself), the tactile qualities of that object, and the estimated distribution and dimensions of the grayscale tones to be found on its surface. The fact that she chose to photograph friends in her loft, however, rather than strangers on the street, thus constructing a representation of social relationships, seems like a critical juncture in a previously solitary practice and marks an early moment of reckoning with her immediate public—her friends and interlocutors.

Piper’s break with strictly conceptual practice was not only about moving away from making objects; it was also about the world crashing in on this hermetically indexical practice. She later described the genesis of this break:

In the spring of 1970 a number of events occurred that changed everything for me: (1) The invasion of Cambodia; (2) The Women’s Movement; (3) Kent State and Jackson State; (4) The closing of CCNY, where I was in my first term as a philosophy major, during the student rebellion. Mostly I did a lot of thinking about my position as an artist, a woman, and a black; and about the natural disadvantages of those attributes; I see now that the crisis and solution was the result of the invasion by the “outside world” of my aesthetic isolation.

Although Piper was one of the few women who moved easily within the boys’ club of Conceptual art and her racial identity was not an issue because it was not visible, this moment of rupture—the beginning of undoing the reductive strictures of pure conceptual idiom—was a common refrain of resistance among women artists, a reaction to the exclusions of the advanced art of the late 1960s. Piper wouldn’t turn to identity and race as subjects for her work until 1979, with the poignant Political Self-Portrait works (pages 220–22), in which different snapshot images of Piper, altered by graphic interventions, are overlaid with first-person texts recounting episodes of sexist, racist, and class-discriminatory behavior she had experienced. The narrative voice is a measured one, distanced in time from the original incidents, so that the text becomes more universal, more accessible, if all the more poignant because the incidents are real. Her awareness of her racial identity, and of the ways in which it was consequential to others and therefore affected her, would begin to find expression in her writings in the late 1970s.

In the Catalysis works Piper used her body as an object, moving outside the art world’s spaces and audience to make more immediate contact with a public:

It seems that since I’ve stopped using gallery space, and stopped announcing the pieces, I’ve stopped using art frameworks. There is very little that separates what I’m doing from quirky personal activity. Except I’ve been thinking a lot about the fact that I relate what I’m doing to people. I subscribe to the idea that art reflects the society to a certain extent, and I feel as though a lot of the work I’m doing is being done because I am a paradigm of what the society is.

Her move from solitary private performances, such as the Catalysis works, to works for which a reactive public was a key component pivoted on her coming to understand herself as a “self-conscious object.” Of greatest interest for the purposes of this text is Piper’s fashioning of her various performance personae as she moved into the world as a self-conscious, self-realized object, and her exploitation of dance as a medium through which to do this. With her confidence, elastic articulation, and knowledge of dance as a discursive form with a history and practice, she has engaged with audiences in a visceral, physical way, as part of a larger project of transferring to and eventually embedding in them complex ideas about race and class.

To talk about personae is to talk about roles, and in various autobiographical texts, Piper has considered the many roles she has inhabited since her childhood. She returns to
autobiography in order to reflect upon the ways in which her identity as an artist, a woman, and a person of acknowledged African descent was formed and has informed her work.

Her most recent effort is *Escape to Berlin: A Travel Memoir*, published in 2018, which tracks the recent decades of her life, including her move from the United States to Berlin, in text interspersed with images by the artist; it is an autobiographical work as self-portrait. The various personae inventoried in her work and writings constitute a socially constructed self that includes musical prodigy, fashion model, street performer, discotéque dancer, analyst, artist, and yogi.\textsuperscript{23} Autobiography as a form of writing exists outside Piper's artistic production, as a backdrop informed by a deep interest in popular forms of culture, and it is interspersed with references to music and dance, both of which were eventually integrated into the performance-lecture format that she invented to contain them.\textsuperscript{24} “Kinds of Performing Objects I Have Been,” one of her inventories of experience, of 1972, functions as an index for the Mythic Being, the persona in which Piper’s ideas about objecthood and personhood were exteriorized in the form of an alter ego: a straight man who shares Piper’s genetic history but whose experience of society and sexual politics is completely different. (In one iteration he gazes at the viewer, holding a cigarette to his lips, with a thought bubble declaring “I embody everything you most hate and fear.”)\textsuperscript{207} Piper considered her self-fashioning of the Mythic Being while fighting off a headache from the dual rigors of her modeling job and the birthing of a new persona. She should be in drag, but should he have a personal history? What does a “static emblem of alien confrontation” wear?\textsuperscript{23} She found it exhausting to fully inhabit such a character—learning to walk in a masculine way, concealing her gender through the mantle of his bad taste and heterosexual swagger—and wondered if it would be the end of her art making.

The character of the Mythic Being would figure in various forms, in works in different mediums, from 1973 to 1976. He first appeared on the streets of New York; then in a series of ads in the pages of the *Village Voice* (pages 194–98); and later evolved into the transgender central protagonist in both versions of *Some Reflective Surfaces and It’s Just Art* (1980) (pages 218, 219). In his first street performances, appearing in an afro wig, applied mustache, and oversized mirrored shades, the Mythic Being moved through the streets reciting various monologues, including a rant about his mother excerpted from Piper’s journal—personal content turned into pithy, disjunctive commentary delivered with the seriousness of a conjuring, a mantra that allowed the character to move from Piper’s apartment to the sidewalk, into public space, among an audience—from inner world to outer public. The journal texts also appeared in the *Village Voice* ads, in cartoonish thought bubbles crudely superimposed onto the photographs, creating a bizarre juxtaposition of diaristic musings with the almost ethereal presence of a shadowy male figure peering out from a crowded page of gallery ads. As if observing him as a conceptual and aesthetic problem, Piper said of the Mythic Being,  

1. I would never dress that way if I were a man; nor would I ever be attracted to someone who dressed that way.
2. He is more than an outer shell, surprisingly. It takes more energy to sustain his attitudes, mannerisms, movements, etc., than I thought.
3. I find myself getting very involved in this mental framework. Chanting the mantra suspends me in a tightrope between two personalities.\textsuperscript{26}

Suspended between the character’s personality and the artist’s intent, Piper channels the various mantras into direct address, speaking to her audience as a self-conscious object, pushing her subterranean thoughts out into public space. In the *Village Voice* works this address is achieved through the formal device of the thought bubble, which layers in the artist’s voice—an interior voice, a narrative of subjectivity that dislodges the work from being only about Piper or her experience but rather negotiates something more abstract and therefore more generalized. The text of the bubbles, handwritten on a white background, underscores its origin in the intimate milieu of the journal entry, while also evoking the newspaper setting and, after the fact, giving the works an almost filmic quality. Here the Mythic Being’s interior is somewhat comically out of context: prurient and slightly sleazy (as in a text that was censored by the editors of the *Village Voice*—“Don’t feel particularly horny, but feel I should masturbate anyway just because I feel so good about doing it.”)—and replaced with a cryptic announcement that the ad intended for that space was available at the Jaap Rietmann bookstore in SoHo, but also poignant and specific to the concerns of a struggling artist in downtown New York ("I really wish I had a firmer grip on reality. Sometimes I think I have better ideas than anyone else around with the exception of Sol LeWitt and possibly Bob Smithson, whose ideas I really respect.") (fig. 6).\textsuperscript{27}

In the complexly layered It’s Just Art, which is organized around video documentation of a performance at Allen Memorial Art Museum, at Oberlin College, in 1980, a transcended permutation of the Mythic Being (with thin mustache and Piper’s own long, wavy hair), serenely regards the viewer from behind oversized sunglasses, while Piper, in voice-over, reads “The End of Cambodia?” an article by William Shawcross, published in the *New York Review of Books* in 1980, on the genocide in Cambodia carried out by the Khmer Rouge. As she reads, Rufus and Chaka Khan’s disco ballad “Do You Love What You Feel?” plays at the same time.\textsuperscript{28} The visual component of the work is similarly collaged: a montage of horrific news images of Cambodian refugees, the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge, and the American invasion. It is a disturbingly calm mash-up of violent images, coolly detached reportage, and the eerie, almost ethereal presence of the transcended version of the Mythic Being, who stands in for our own dissociative response to the real consequences of war. The music is irresistible, and as we fall under the sway of its rhythms, we are drawn further into the parade of violence. Here the thought balloons function again as a mode of address, bringing the unspoken and the unconscious to the surface, making them impossible to ignore, and heightening “the self-conscious reaction of the actual viewing audience to the political information being disseminated.”\textsuperscript{29} Abstracted from his static position in the pages of the *Voice*, where he initially appeared in 1973–75, occupying the disconnected place between personal journal entries and overtly disturbing and...
uncomfortable social situations, the passive, femme Mythic Being of *It's Just Art* cynically turns the viewer into a voyeur of violence. The slippage between images, voiceover, and Piper's presence becomes a source of powerful tension.

**Listening by Dancing**

Piper's autobiographical texts speak to a life inflected by music and dance, including piano, violin, and ballet lessons, and her stint as a discotheque dancer. In 1980 she was listening to Patti Smith, The Police, and the Talking Heads; in 1981 she heard Ornette Coleman perform live. The strong presence of funk in *It's Just Art* turns African-American popular music into a key compositional and structural device. Piper recalls in her chronology that when she performed it in Seattle, in 1981, a member of the audience asked her why she was up on stage shaking her booty.30

Dance, with its particular balance of intimacy and abstraction, provides another mode of direct address in Piper's work, as both performance and conceptual framework:

> I was interested in further exploring the notion of dance as a medium of performer-audience confrontation in the specific context of the evasion of political responsibility. The use of physical movements and gestures in dance as a medium of communication is less explicit than speech and less intimate than physical displays of affection, sexuality, or aggression. At the same time it is more concrete than speech and more conventionalized—and therefore intersubjectively accessible—than physical displays of emotion.31

*Funk Lessons*, a collaborative performance staged seven times between 1983 and 1984, is among Piper's most iconic and most popular works ([pages 230, 231]). It is now widely shown as *Funk Lessons with Adrian Piper*, a film by Sam Samore of a performance at the University of California, Berkeley (1983), and has garnered a range of reactions, including being moved to tears.32 The accessibility of the work, both live and in documentation—the music's compelling, mesmerizing rhythm and deeply American roots—is certainly part of the its longevity, but *Funk Lessons* is also a brilliant piece of institutional and social critique. Piper, in her disarming pedagogical persona, infiltrates the arena of social dance to deliver an embodied cultural education. The gold-embossed invitation mailed out as an advertisement for the performance offers “music appreciation” and “social dancing,” and promises that the artist “[has] rhythm, will travel.” The poster for a performance at New Langton Arts, San Francisco, featuring an image of Bootsy Collins, of Parliament-Funkadelic, decked out in full funk regalia, also advertised the performance as “a collaborative experiment in cross-cultural transfusion” ([fig. 7]).33

Piper's invitation to dance constitutes an optional social contract, an agreement entered into by the artist and any willing participants. Opting out is always a possibility, and part of the video's charm is watching the public, some reluctant, some eager to jump in, as they are drawn in by the irresistible syncopation of funk rhythms and the artist’s disarmingly approachable address. The artist's pedagogical voice in *Funk Lessons* would be the formal and conceptual center of Piper's direct-address works going forward; patient, professorial, and...
almost overly expository, she is also funny and sly, withholding her own much more extensive experience with the subject. (That Piper is herself a great and exuberant dancer is revealed in later works.) But the goal of the performance is much less safe and more aspirational in its desire to destabilize received notions about cultural identity: as identified by the artist in the text “Notes on Funk,” it is nothing less than to “restructure people’s social identities, by making accessible to them a common medium of communication—funk music and dance—that has been largely inaccessible to white culture and has consequently exacerbated the xenophobic fear, hostility, and incomprehension that generally characterize the reaction of whites to black popular culture in this society.” Piper breaks down the cultural history and mechanics of funk in a way her audience can relate to, helping them move through any initial anxiety they may have, creating a situation in which the participants might be able to understand and confront their unacknowledged racist assumptions about African-American popular culture and its associations with class, rhythm, sexuality, and violence. None of this is made explicit or is overtly visible; nevertheless, the group ethos that forms as the artist and her participants dance together is powerful and moving to watch. There is, of course, no way to gauge social transformation. But in this, or indeed in any of Piper’s work, the insistent clarity of her language and the trenchant and detailed cultural analysis make Funk Lessons one of the most affecting works of socially engaged art: it establishes a common ground, a meeting place for a vexed subject and a social space, at a time when such zones are rare indeed.

The success of Funk Lessons can be measured at least in part by the negative reactions it provoked. At the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, a poster advertising the event was defaced with vernacular language calling attention to the fact of Piper’s racial identity—exposing the racist assumption that her identity is something she would actively try to hide. This response, of course, goes right to the heart of the matter: what are the assumptions we make about one another? Piper’s dancing public has reacted as well, with responses that range from reluctant and uptight to what Piper calls “an antidote to the syndrome of the Other: Fuck it. Let’s boogie.” Indeed, she has framed the work as a developing language of communication:

Funk constitutes a language of interpersonal communication and collective self-expression that has its origins in African tribal music and dance and is the result of the increasing interest of contemporary black musicians and the populace in those sources elicited by the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and early 1970s. . . . This medium of expression has been largely inaccessible to white culture, in part because of the different roles of social dance in white as opposed to black culture. . . . My immediate aim in staging the large-scale performance . . . was to enable everyone present to GET DOWN AND PARTY. TOGETHER. This is a radical idea: empowerment through collective experience and the embodiment of history and politics by those participating in it, toward the possibility of finding a place of greater cultural understanding and overcoming racial barriers. The consequences of transferring agency from artist to
participant are subtle but potentially profound; what is transferred turns out to be the obligations and responsibilities of nothing less than enlightenment. What are the implications for an audience that internalizes a political and ethical question? Piper has written of using “the performance situation therapeutically, as a way of trying to come to terms with deeply internalized racist stereotypes by which we are all victimized in one way or another.” And all of this is brought about by Piper’s particular form of experiential direct address; along with funk music, it becomes a medium of communication. No other artist in the early 1980s achieved such a deeply political and subversive collectivity.

Piper’s relationship to funk, like Graham’s to rock music, is an intervention in the history and reception of a popular art form. But her activation of funk is as a physical medium, a dance form that simultaneously allows one-on-one contact and the building of something collective. Along with funk music it makes up a social glue that is able to contain the mixed responses to and anxieties about the cultural differences of her participating public. In It’s Just Art this is carried out by the soul queen Chaka Kahn, but there is an underlying harshness in that work, in the slippage between the attraction of the music and the repulsion of the violent and disturbing images. Viewers drawn in by the music find themselves pushed out by the reality of their own lassitude.

Piper’s meta-performances, participatory lectures based on the reprising and augmenting of already existing works, grew out of this lecture style—accessible, conversational, and encouraging direct dialogue among groups of people. They recall the teach-ins of the Vietnam era, both inspiring and practical, a way to proactively address the political issues of the 1960s in the consciousness-raising groups that became a structural part of the feminist political movement at the end of the decade. Piper was certainly familiar with these grass roots strategies through her work in the Civil Rights Movement, in consciousness-raising groups, in consciousness-raising groups with the Art Worker’s Coalition, and as an organizer herself, of a consciousness-raising group in 1971. The first such performance, Funk Lessons Meta-Performance, in 1987, was both pedagogical and participatory; the culminating meta-performance, Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago, in 2004, was part lecture, part instruction, and part social dance—one of the most powerful works of participatory art of the last fifty years. This work, which provides the thematic origin of this essay, is reconsidered later on.

Decide Who You Are

Piper kept some distance from the contentious culture wars of the 1990s, but her works from that decade uniquely mark the era’s discourses of race and xenophobia, through her own experiences of blackness, whiteness, and otherness. Indeed, her work so precisely reflects the questions of justice and equity achieving wider attention now, in 2018, that it feels prescient. Her discourse of resistance began with the “reactive guerrilla performances . . . intervention in order to prevent co-optation” of My Calling (Card) #1 and #2. These performances borrowed the form of the professional business card, that predigital mode of social networking. Each card is printed in a slightly different way. The first, given to people making racist remarks (or tacitly agreeing with them) in Piper’s presence, is on light- or medium-brown paper; the second, given to men making unwanted advances in bars and discos, is on white card stock and appears more like a standard business card. The text on both cards is written in the first person, and both are very firm and polite. Both performances in effect turn the tables on race- and gender-based assumptions with a transaction, one initiated by a racist comment or unwanted come-on and completed with the taking of a card and the internalizing, or not, of the information it contains.

In both cases, the direct address of the cards creates an intimate confrontation. The one entailed by My Calling (Card) #1 is somewhat more complex, because the card gives the recipient new information: that Piper is black. As the offender absorbs the text on the card, the transaction is certainly likely to activate change, whether through defensiveness, retreat, or (perhaps) apology. Like the Catalysis performances, the calling-card encounters were personal actions executed with unsuspecting participants; as in those performances, an exchange is initiated, a social turn is launched. My Calling (Card) #1 and #2 are regularly shown in galleries, but such display is only secondary to their functioning within the world of human social relations—although, indeed, they retain their remarkable power even in exhibition settings: Piper recedes as the responsibility for respectful interaction is turned back onto the viewer left holding the proverbial card. The hegemony of the accepted art-viewing environment cannot remain intact in the presence of such works.

Piper’s participatory modes became more pointed in the 1990s, and at the same time more ambitious in their invitation, raising the conceptual and political stakes. The familiar architecture of the voting booth in Vote/Emote (1990) feels quaint and oddly optimistic, in its nod to privacy and choice—belying, of course, the history of voter exclusion and suppression. The title, too, is somewhat provocative, suggesting that we vote with something more (or less) than our rational minds, a binary frequently found at the ethical center of Piper’s work. Each of four booths contains a backlit image of protestors of visibly African descent and a notebook in which viewers are instructed to list “fears of what we might know about you,” “fears of how we might treat you,” “fears of what we might think of you,” and “fears of what we might do with your accumulations.” This intimate space—a putative space of neutrality and privacy—allows viewers to receive these direct instructions, which challenge them to confess and reflect on their most privately held notions about identity and character, in a way perhaps less immediately destabilizing than direct conversation. Among these provocations, the question of what might be done with our accumulations is intriguing. Bodies and their residue, the remains of a life, come up in several of Piper’s works from around that time, including The Big Four Oh (1988) and What Will Become of Me (1985–ongoing) “Accumulations” may refer to the things that evidence a life. But it may also refer to accumulations of people—to the power of collective protest and representation, in the contexts of both political protest and political art. In Vote/Emote Piper again exploits the pull between the anonymous and the personal, between private and public ethics, challenging viewers to put themselves on the line, to choose.
The environment of Cornered (page 248) recalls the formal and orderly qualities of a classroom: a video monitor positioned in a gallery corner, isolated from the viewer by an overturned wood table and faced by a triangular array of chairs. On the wall behind the monitor, on either side of it, are copies of Piper’s father’s two birth certificates, one identifying him as “white,” the other as “octroon.” In the video Piper calmly and insistently interrogates her viewers about their racial presumptions. Her congenial, professorial delivery and prim appearance, in plain blue sweater and white pearls, are decidedly at odds with the confrontational face-off set up by the installation: artist and viewer are both cornered, divided by the table positioned as a barricade, as if in self-defense. “I’m black,” Piper says in the video. “Now let’s deal with this social fact and the fact of my stating it together.” In Passing beyond Passing, a video of 2004, she notes the varied reactions of Cornered’s viewers, who sort themselves into various identities depending on their reactions to the work; many of them, she observes, presume themselves to be white.44

Cornered, Piper has said, faces “the illusion of otherness, the illusion that each of us is defined not just by our individual uniqueness but by our racial uniqueness. . . . In Cornered I try to undercut this ideology [of uniqueness] by exploding the myth of racial separation.”45 Viewer and artist occupy the space together, but here it is the artist who speaks, in a relationship that is contingent upon the silence of the audience, and the fears and actions that this silence mitigates. Cornered remains within Minimalism’s formal lexicon and is visually anchored to the architecture of the gallery, a connection made overt in one of the volumes of Piper’s writings, which places an image of Out of the Corner, Piper’s 1990 update of the work, just below one showing LeWitt’s 46 Three-Part Variations on 3 Different Kinds of Cubes (1967) (figs. 8, 9).46 In both Cornered and Out of the Corner, the chairs extend out into the viewing space, inviting viewers to sit and engage in an act of conscious listening. The tension in these works lies precisely in the problem of listening versus hearing, in whether or not viewers take the opportunity for reflection, and this is what moves it into the participatory sphere that Piper’s work continues to occupy.47

In “The Triple Negation of Colored Women Artists,” an essay from 1990, Piper looks at the way in which artwork by CWAs (her acronym) is only ever discussed in light of the artists’ identities, resulting in the “Eurocentric art world’s negation of CWAs along three dimensions: as coloreds, as women, and as artists.”48 She was responding to another essay, the artist Howardena Pindell’s “Art World Racism: A Documentation,” of 1989, which, by amassing art-world statistics, tracked the exclusion of African-American artists from mainstream art institutions. Piper was already cautious about the art-world embrace of multiculturalism, the redress and inclusion on the part of museums intended to respond to decades, even centuries, of exclusion, and her text could be a primer on the early years of the culture wars:

I am encouraged by this recent development, but I am also suspicious of its long-term significance. It coincides too neatly with an interest in difference and otherness in other fields such as comparative literature, history, and anthropology, in which the main subject of investigation is the person, not the artifact. . . . The object of preoccupation defined by these issues is not the artifact but rather its producer as “other.”49

In the present, no curator or historian can claim to be unaware of the artistic triple bind faced by women of color, but in 1990 the notion of turning that very disadvantage into a space of empowerment was a radical proposal. What It’s Like, What It Is #3 (1991) (pages 258, 259), created for the exhibition Dislocations, organized by Robert Storr at MoMA, makes plain this formula for erasure and negation inside the context of the museum. Storr commissioned projects that critiqued the history of and absences from institutions such as MoMA, and the exhibition as a whole would later be understood as a harbinger of the contentious decade to come. Projects were dispersed in several locations throughout the building, including the galleries dedicated to painting and sculpture. Works by Piper, Chris Burden, and David Hammons were installed on the third floor, and work by Bruce Nauman in the basement, spaces frequently used for contemporary exhibitions. (That What It’s Like, What It Is #3 would be reinstalled thirty years later, for her retrospective, in MoMA’s atrium, where Barnett Newman’s obelisk had been placed for the opening of the Museum’s new Yoshio Taniguchi building, in 2004, functions as a different kind of pointed institutional critique.)50

What It’s Like, What It Is #3 is a white cube—almost blindingly white—containing a single square column with video monitors installed on each of its sides, toward the top, with stadium-style seating around it. Viewers seated in this antiseptic environment find themselves faced with a talking head—an African-American man—denying stereotypes about his identity and blackness in a seemingly unending list, in the same flat pedagogical voice used by Piper in Cornered:

“I’m not pushy. I’m not sneaky. I’m not lazy. I’m not noisy. I’m not vulgar. I’m not rowdy. I’m not horny. I’m not scary. I’m not shiftless. I’m not crazy. I’m not servile. I’m not stupid. I’m not dirty. I’m not smelly. I’m not childish. I’m not evil.”51 These derogatory epithets seem to trap the speaker—a black man held within the constraints of the hegemonic institution, the white cube standing in for museum architecture but also specifically recalling LeWitt’s early serial plane sculptures. The work implicates the viewer as well, who must contend with the blame implied in the man’s insistent denial of these common racist assumptions. A narrow strip of mirror surrounds the inside perimeter of the work, infinitely reflecting and repeating the talking head, and forcing the (overwhelmingly white) viewers to watch themselves being directly addressed, both as a group and one to one, effectively and firmly riveting them to their seats.52 The highly structured inverted pyramid of What It’s Like, What It Is #3 expands upon the shape and simple theatricality of Cornered: a single voice, speaking plainly, in a highly orchestrated environment, delivering uncomfortable truths.

Whom does Piper engage with this work? No viewer can remain passive: each becomes a participant faced with ethical choices about what to ignore and what to take away. The receptive viewer is reminded that racial identity is as much of a construction as the white cube—a now-formulaic understanding of identity that Piper’s proposals move beyond. The assumed neutrality of the institution is a similar product of cultural conditioning, received by one generation after another—
Fig. 8
Sol LeWitt
*46 Three-Part Variations on 3 Different Kinds of Cubes.* 1967
Enamel on forty-six aluminum structures
Each 45 × 15 × 15 in. (114 × 38 × 38 cm)
Installation view in *46 Three-Part Variations on 3 Different Kinds of Cubes,* Dwan Gallery, New York, February 3-28, 1968

Fig. 9
*Out of the Corner.* 1990
Video installation. Video (color, sound), 00:26:00, with seventeen monitors, sixteen pedestals, table, seventeen chairs, and sixty-four gelatin silver prints
Dimensions variable
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
in fact, a myth. And while this may now seem trite, it is a post-modern legacy that remains difficult for many people to accept, as evidenced by the enormous backlash against immigrants and people of color heightened by the election to the U.S. presidency, in 2016, of Donald Trump, who himself rehearses, with his vocal minority, the most primitively racist ideas.

Among the many early-1990s interventions into museum institutions, by a generation of artists acting out against the received binaries that dictated how race and class were understood, the critique in Piper's work remains the most pointed and most uncompromising, in part because it insists on interpersonal human confrontation, rather than formulaic abstraction, to activate a shift in consciousness. It is startling, now, with nearly thirty years of hindsight, to realize how trenchant these works were at the time and how urgent they still are. As the football star Colin Kaepernick continues to be punished for refusing to stand during the National Anthem—kneeling, instead, to highlight cultural indifference and racial divisiveness—it is as critical as it ever was to dispel assumptions about African-American masculinity.

In his essay for the Dislocations catalogue, Storr considers Piper's relationship to abstraction, noting that it is retrospective, as she gave it up when she shifted from a purely conceptual practice in pursuit of something rooted in the real. He quotes from her text “Flying,” of 1987:

Abstraction is flying. Abstracting is ascending to higher and higher levels of conceptual generalization; soaring back and forth, reflectively circling around above the specificity and immediacy of things and events in space and time. . . . Abstraction is also flight. . . . Abstraction is freedom from the socially prescribed and consensually accepted. . . . Abstraction is a solitary journey through the conceptual universe, with no anchors, no cues, no signposts, no maps.53

Piper's movement away from abstraction evolved into direct address to viewers, into locating us in the political and social here and now. Her turn to the subjects of racism and xenophobia—a response to the experience, as Piper has described it, of other people's need to assign her a racial category, in essence to directly address her and "tell me who and what [they] thought I was"—was a turn toward a realism that specifically borrows images and text from the real world, as a means of opening a conversation.54

In 1991 Anita Hill, a young African-American lawyer, testified to being sexually harassed by Clarence Thomas, the African-American nominee to the Supreme Court of the United States. The televised confirmation hearings and the accompanying media commentary were riveting and deeply disturbing, as Hill was turned from victim into a racist and sexist caricature of a scheming female—an infuriating pivot that for many women was indelible and formative.55 It was a moment that repositioned national discussion about race based on the power dynamic between the powerful male Supreme Court nominee and the lone female protagonist simply speaking the truth. In Piper's Decide Who You Are series, made the same year, Hill is both concrete image and symbol of a lone but startlingly frank voice, of an unassailable form of speech (pages 260-67). She appears in nineteen of the twenty works, in a photograph showing her as an eight-year-old child, a visual and ethical anchor for the work and the symbolic center of the series.

Each work consists of framed magazine and newspaper photographs set between two panels whose images remain the same: Hill on the right and, on the left, a drawing by Piper of a small soapstone Chinese sculpture, inherited from her uncle, of the Three Wise Monkeys (see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil). The media images vary, but they can be read as a constellation of victims and perpetrators of various kinds of violence and class and racial conflict—police brutality, murder, hunting, as well as the kind of white-collar crime whose damage reaches down into the poorest families. Decide Who You Are #19: Torch Song Alert (fig. 10) groups an image of police officers in riot helmets next to an overturned car with, above it, close-up images of Clark Clifford, Charles Keating, and the former U.S. President George H. W. Bush, all of them powerful men who have remained unscathed by their various crimes.56

The image of Anita Hill is overlaid with text, assembled by Piper from comments by and conversations with her colleagues, listing dismissive and defensive rejoinders to protests against race or gender discrimination. Such speech, the Decide works suggest, also inflicts violence. In Hill's case this violence was both explicit and implicit; the sexist and racist responses to her claims allowed the public to instrumentalize her body and privacy, opening them to discussion and judgment.

In the left-hand panels of the Decide works, overprinted on the image of the three monkeys, are Piper's personal writings.57 These texts, including that text printed on every iteration of the Hill image, were published in 1992, by Paula Cooper Gallery, with additional condensed texts that amplify the problems of the misread and misrepresented body. The compilation of defensive excuses, threats, and rationalizations that overlays Hill's image, single spaced and all uppercased, pile up relentlessly, assaulting viewers directly and adamantly insisting that we take a side, that we choose a voice with which to align and to consider why we have done so. How do we decide who we are? The threshold of ethics, the moment when a viewer must make a choice or consciously opt out, forms the structural logic of many of Piper's works from the 1990s to the present. And the ethical choice is always clear. The Decide Who You Are series concedes nothing. The gauge of complicity it proposes is uncompromising; silence, it suggests, whether Hill's or our own, is not an option.

The Decide texts are deserving of a separate study of their own, on the complex marshaling of different voices to express acerbic, darkly ironic political satire (“How to Handle Black People: A Beginner's Manual,” “Field Work”) as well as brutal violence (“Hardball,” “Parasite,” “Skinned Alive”). These voices accumulate into an anthology of positions on power. One of the texts, which reappears in Self-Portrait 2000 (2001), beginning “HEY, GOD!,” curses an uncaring god, rattles our cage with alliteration and profanity, and grapples directly with a world without moral order—a world that seems to have abandoned reason.58 It is as true and resonant now as it was in 1992. In Please, God, a work from 1990, the appeal takes a very different tone, tempered by the possibility of innocence, in a looped video of scrolling text that asks for protection from the treatment that young African-American girls will likely endure, set against footage of nine-year-old girls dancing as Billie...
Fig. 10
Decide Who You Are #19: Torch Song Alert. 1992
Screenprinted images and text printed on six sheets of paper, mounted on foam core
72 × 42 in. (182.8 × 106.7 cm); 14 × 8½ in. (35.6 × 21.6 cm); 14½ × 9¾ in.
(36.8 × 24.8 cm); 14 × 13¼ in. (35.6 × 33.7 cm); 34¼ × 52 in. (87 × 132.1 cm);
and 72 × 42 in. (182.8 × 106.7 cm)
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Purchased with funds contributed by
the International Director's Council and the Photography Council
Holliday sings “God Bless the Child.” Piper’s works on race operate both from a position of pessimism while also offering the possibility of hope. They insist on the present as an ethical compass, and are a reminder of where we have been.

**Love, Peace, and Soul**

The philosopher Diarmuid Costello, writing about Piper’s meta-performances, has argued that the multiple roles of philosopher, artist, and practitioner of yoga necessitate a multi-valent practice that is itself a model of artistic self-fashioning.58 The artist’s public identity can be conceived as a performative part of her practice that is deeply informed by the Kantian idea of an identity always in formation.62

Shortly before she left the United States for good, in 2005, Piper was invited to the Art Institute of Chicago to present *Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago*, as part of a lecture series on hip-hop and global culture, which now exists as the meta-performance video of the same title (fig. 11). Piper projected the Color Wheel Series of digital images (pages 272, 273), with music and light effects, as the backdrop to a lecture performance. Piper has described this series in terms of the intersection of the color wheel—a Western construction, used for the display of the Pantone Matching System for the standardization and control of color—with Shiva, the Hindu god of yoga and dance.63 Shiva, manifesting in the Color Wheel Series as Lord Nataraja, dances away evil and “destroys all names and forms,” an apt and beautiful metaphor for the kind of social event proposed by Piper’s dance-based works: literally going beyond language and joining bodies in movement to transcend social boundaries and norms.64 Piper’s disposition of colors—assigning them to the three Acting Heads in each image, using more than a thousand of them to represent the concealment of layers of identity, harnessing the idea of white as “the mis-categorization of all colors,” designating a specific set of works for each event in which they are shown—provides an almost infinite number of configurations.65 When shown as individual works, the effect is different from that of being components of a meta-performance, but the potential of dance to break down the layers of illusion that stand between us and reality remains.

*Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago* was a performance event that combined a lecture and demonstration on funk music and dance, followed by a selection of film clips, at the end of which the audience spontaneously begins to dance along with her, the most stirring part of the work. The event concludes with a conversation between the artist and her audience about the meaning of the preceding experiences. In the first section, Piper breaks down funk as a dance form in a movement-based call and response, in which she suggests that her participants try out some dance elements, first nodding their heads, then standing and bouncing. These movements, she says, constitute tools for listening, as the body becomes a vehicle for a multisensory experience facilitating “cross-cultural contact.”66 To watch the members of her audience—some of whom appear to be listening to the music and, perhaps, trying out these dance moves for the first time—is powerful. (Some audience members may have been familiar with Piper’s work, but it’s likely that many were there for the hip-hop, thus accessing Piper’s conceptual practice through the more immediately accessible lens of current popular culture.)

A key part of the pedagogical portion of the lecture is a quick lesson in cultural history, which Piper accomplishes through a series of excerpts. First she shows the original *Funk Lessons* video, which historically grounds her subject, and as she is in that earlier work, Piper is disarming, friendly, and succinct. This is followed by clips from five Hollywood films that appropriate the device of teaching social dancing in order to overcome cultural and racial differences. These clips, in which hip-hop and funk function as critical protagonists, include *Honey* (2003), in which the combination of dance moves and basketball moves leads to a choreographed reconciliation; *Bringing Down the House* (2003), in which Queen Latifah loosens up a tightly wound Steve Martin; and a fantastically absurd scene from *Head of State* (2003), in which Chris Rock gets a room full of upper-middle-class white people to get down. The last clip in the series comes from the 2002 British film *The Guru*, in which an Indian dance teacher comes to New York City to find his fortune. His mishaps as a foreigner, both ironic and earnest, in white upper-middle-class culture lead to a hiliarious, and joyful, cultural mash-up that brings people together across class and racial lines through dance. In all these films, it seems, uptight white people need people of color to show them how to relax. Dance is the social glue that brings together seemingly irreconcilable groups; with a lesson in pop-cultural history and a live demonstration, Piper posits dance as a defense against and a corrective for racism.

The lecture-demonstration’s participatory aspect expands unexpectedly when an African-American woman breaks free of the gently moving, passively listening audience and climbs onto the stage to dance with Piper. She is immediately followed by more people, who seem jubilant, if a little surprised to find themselves there. The soundtrack at this point is a hypnotic section from *Shiva DANCES, for God’s Sake* (for John Talbert) (2002), a sound work by Piper, which combines her voice with piano, Hindu chanting, and electronic stylings. We are urged, on the cover of the CD of the work, to “Wake Up and Get Down,” to a melodic warm-up followed by ten minutes of “serious, funky, get-down-and-party, multilayered r&amp;r rhythms…” Great for high-energy yoga, Danzecinematics, raves, world music dance parties.”67

Dance as celebration is at the center of Adrian Moves to Berlin (page 304), a video created in 2007, two years after Piper had permanently left the United States. In Berlin’s Alexanderplatz, the urban meeting point of the former East and West Germanys, she dances to the Euro beats of Berlin house music from the early 2000s. Here we finally see, in a looped, long-format video, what a skilled and graceful dancer she is. Her joyful singular figure occupies the vast public space—one that is strangely without scale in the peculiar manner of many of the city’s public spaces after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent two decades of reconstruction. Piper has called this open-ended dance an improvisational “endurance task performance,” and it is also, indeed, a ruminating on artistic labor.68 The construction workers who wander in and out of the video’s background are, like Adrian, part of a process—Germany’s reunification—bigger than themselves. The delight evident in the action and the location in which it takes place suggest that Piper’s spirits have been lifted at the prospect of living and working in a country where two sides of a cultural
Fig. 11
Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago. 2004
Documentation of the participatory performance-lecture. Video (color, sound), 01:43:18
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: video still at 00:51:52
divide can be bridged through the hard (and always imperfect) work of individual citizens. The next chapter of her artistic and philosophical production, in this new environment, seems to open with new life and vigor, and a renewed sense of the possibilities of a social practice such as hers.

Imagining a Future

In September of 2012, in *Thwarted Projects, Dashed Hopes, A Moment of Embarrassment* (page 306), Piper announced that she was retiring from being black. The work, in the form of a document posted on her website, politely suggests the option of, in the future, calling her The Artist Formerly Known as African American, an echo of how the multitalented artist Prince was famously referred to, from 1993 to 2000, a period in which he adopted an unpronounceable glyph for his name, as “the Artist Formerly Known as Prince.” While Prince’s reinvention was the product of frustration with his record label, Piper’s provocative conceptual gesture is not entirely dissimilar in its audacity. The tone of its last line is ironical—“Please join me in celebrating this exciting new adventure in pointless administrative precision and futile institutional control!”—but the work is very much an aspirational and concrete challenge to the authority of institutionalized identity formation. *Thwarted Projects, Dashed Hopes, A Moment of Embarrassment* intervenes in the language of identity and identity politics, which is too reductive and inadequate to contain any one person’s biological heritage and various social identifications, and, as well, ignores the systemic and institutional discrimination that is the result.

The latter disjunction echoes the way in which the term “post-black” was originally conceived by the curator Thelma Golden and the artist Glenn Ligon, as a contradiction, to describe artists who do not want to be limited to a racial category but whose work is, Golden has said, “steeped . . . in redefining complex notions of blackness.” We may well be, as Piper tells us in *Cornered*, beyond absolutes of racial identity, but the world is not beyond racism. Piper’s chutzpah in calling out this idea both models it—in a way similar to its introduction, in her professorial voice, in *Cornered*—and attempts to put it to rest. Piper’s withdrawal came just as a new round of culture wars was ignited in the United States, as activists—and media attention—returned to the issue of ongoing police violence against African-American men, reaching a crescendo not seen since the 1960s. By releasing *Thwarted Projects* on her website, Piper made canny use of digital media as a disembodied forum, open sourced and accessible—a form that anticipates the current rage for the genealogy websites that connect people with their family ancestries. *Thwarted Projects* has also been reproduced in print and for exhibition, positioning and circulating its declaration as a kind of manifesto to be activated depending on the context.

Local attention to race-based violence coalesced in 2013 with the foundation of the national organization Black Lives Matter, which was formed in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed teenager. Piper intended *Imagine [Trayvon Martin]* (2013) (fig. 12), a printed poster, to be distributed gratis from the APRA Foundation Berlin website and by the galleries where it was shown. The poster shows a ghosted image of the young boy with crosshairs superimposed over his face and, along the bottom of the image, the simple, first-person admonition to “Imagine what it was like to be me.” Martin gazes levelly at the viewer even as he disappears from view; his words remain, suggesting an empathic moment of reckoning and also recalling John Lennon’s emblematic anthem, written in 1971, at the height of the Vietnam War, which exhorts us to dream of a world without categories or restrictions. *Imagine [Trayvon Martin]* asks us to think about and honor a little boy, an identity snuffed out in an epidemic of violence that seems to know no end.

In “On Wearing Three Hats,” an essay of 1996, Piper considers her varied practices as an artist, a philosopher, and a yoga practitioner. The three hats—a riff, in effect, on the feminist trope of the constantly multitasking woman—can be taken as a model for artistic self-fashioning, a way of rooting one’s practice in the world. This has implications for current art production, such as social practice, a discipline that developed in the early 2000s through works by Tania Bruguera, Suzanne Lacy, and others, and through writings by the art historians Claire Bishop and Shannon Jackson. In social-practice works these artists often intentionally take up roles that fall outside of traditional studio practice, in order to reach audiences and open conversations beyond the confines and politics of the object-driven art economy. In her most recent work, Piper brings her conceptual and participatory strategies to questions of ethics, in which truth exists as something that matters. *The Probable Trust Registry: The Rules of the Game #1-3* (2013) (pages 308, 309), her most monumental participatory work to date, is a social contract, a work fundamentally about trust—the foundation of a society in which human transactions of all kinds are conducted in a successful, peaceful, and orderly manner. This is a society in which each individual can rely on the others to abide by the same rules, and therefore one in which justified expectations can be fulfilled. It offers to each person the possibility of means to efficiently pursue and achieve her or his personal goals, within a community in which each supports this aspiration in the others.

Viewers are invited to sign a contract that commits them to three statements: “I will always be too expensive to buy. I will always mean what I say. I will always do what I say I am going to do.” These are simple ideas, but they bear profound ethical and political implications, amounting to an invitation to form a community based on honor and trust.

Through her art and her philosophical work, Piper addresses an expanded public. Her yoga practice, to the degree that it has been incorporated directly into her artwork and moved beyond a solitary practice (which she also maintains), becomes a vehicle for a radically reconfigured “we,” an abstraction of the audience she both engages and releases. This longtime pursuit of transcendence has yielded a work on the ethics of humor: *The Order of Celestial Laughter*, released at her website in 2017, is defined by its Credo and is made up of individuals who can laugh at themselves. The work is described as a group performance with no spatiotemporal dimensions. Membership is secret and by invitation only.
Imagine what it was like to be me

Fig. 12
Imagine [Trayvon Martin]. 2013
Photolithograph
10 ¼ x 10 ¼ in. (26.5 x 27.3 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin


4. Ibid.

5. Rodney King is the subject of Piper’s “ Black Box/White Box” (1992).


10. See Piper’s page work Taped Lecture on Sensation (given November 7, 1968) (1968) on page 156 of this volume. A sample of the sound work is at APRA, AdrianPiper.com/ VS/sound_sensation1.shtml.


17. Piper, correspondence with the author, spring 2014.

18. Although Lippard invited SVA students to participate in the exhibition, and a few women did, Piper is the only woman artist who appears in the published version. See Lippard, “Groups,” Studio International 179, no. 820 (March 1970): pp. 93–94.

19. The texts that accompany the Groups photographs speak in an even more deadpan, scientifically objective voice than that of Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece (1970). Both were influenced by Alain Robbie-Grillier’s descriptive voice in his novels, Piper, correspondence with the author, January 18, 2018. See also Piper, “ Personal Chronology, ” p. 315.


23. Ibid., p. 89.

24. Piper, “Personal Chronology.”


27. Ibid., p. 110.


35. Ibid., p. 207.

36. Ibid., p. 208.

37. Ibid., p. 195.

38. Ibid., p. 203.


42. The original version of My Calling (Card) #1, with Piper’s name at the bottom, is medium brown in color; the second version with no name is light brown, but with “ © Angry Art” on the back.

43. Recently the notions of occupying or “ holding space ” have been applied to a kind of activism that involves bodies taking up space in public, and it’s symbolic potential. Witness the images of the millions of people who marched in protest following the 2017 inauguration of U.S. President Donald Trump, contrasted with those of the sparsely attended official event. The Occupy Wall Street protests began in 2011 to highlight income inequality and the failure of financial institutions to act for the good of the public, but it quickly spread to become a more generalized international movement, comprising such activities as Occupy Museums (including the Museum of Modern Art) to call attention to the disparities in representation and inclusion. The history of collective and collaborative practices as counteractions against institutions of all kinds spans the twentieth century. See, for example, Claire Bishop, Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship (New York: Verso, 2012).

44. Passing beyond Passing combines documentary of Cornered, along with a lecture, discussion, and clips of Hollywood films in which passing for white is part of the plot.

45. Piper, in Berger, The Critique of Pure Racism: An Interview with Adrian Piper in Adrian Piper: A Retrospective, pp. 77–78.


49. Ibid., p. 164.

50. MoMA’s programming of the atrium in the Whitney designed by Renzo Piano is largely anecdotal, but the Museum’s program—The Whitney: A History of Art in the early 1990s was a first-ever study of diversity in museums which has received widespread attention in the field. See Peggy Levit, “ Museums Must Attract Diverse Visitors or Risk ‘Irrelevancy, ’” The Atlantic, November 9, 2015. See also J. Mark Davidson Schuster, Research Division: Report #2, The Audience for American Art Museums (Washington, D.C.: National Endowment for the Arts; Santa Ana, Calif: Seven Locks Press, 1992), pp. 6, 8, 12, 24, 39.


Anita Hill’s remarkable memoir Speaking Truth to Power, published in 1991, reintroduced the Quaker phrase in its title into the mainstream lexicon. Hill’s astonishing testimony galvanized a new generation of feminist activism that has most recently surfaced in the #MeToo movement, launched in response to widespread allegations of sexual harassment in the entertainment and media industries and in politics. That many people speaking up about sexual abuse in 2017 were unaware that the original MeToo campaign was in fact started a decade ago by Tarana Burke—an African-American woman—to support victims of sexual assault has demonstrated one of the ways in which women of color are often confined to the sidelines in conversations about contemporary feminist issues. Hill has become a respected spokesperson for the movement and is leading a task force on sexual harassment in the workplace.

The financier Charles Keating was convicted of racketeering and fraud in the savings & loan crisis of the late 1980s; Clark Clifford, a former U.S. secretary of defense, was charged with fraud, conspiracy, and taking bribes in the collapse of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International but was not indicted due to his failing health.


Piper, “HEY, GOD!” xxxv, 6/7/92, in ibid.

The question of the troubled future for African-American children, boys in particular, continues to be a charged subject for artists and writers; it is the subject of Ta-Nehisi Coates’s Between the World and Me (2015), an essay addressed to Coates’s teenage son, about the realities of growing up black and middle class. Coates reflects on his upbringing, in the 1980s in Baltimore, and is pessimistic about what has changed since then, and about overcoming systemic racism and white supremacy in the United States. Conversely Arthur Jafa’s film anthem Love Is the Message (2016), set to the powerful gospel-inspired music of Chance the Rapper, suggests the possibility of redemption and hope, despite the ongoing violence being done to black bodies and black culture. Jafa’s film, in my opinion, would not be possible without Piper’s work of the 1990s, which remains as contemporary as ever.

Don Cornelius, the creator of Soul Train, the epic American dance show, signed off each episode with these three words.


Simon Leung, conversation with the author, fall 2016. Leung cites Piper’s influence on his practice, including the idea of identity always in formation.


Several years after making Thwarted Projects, Dashed Hopes, A Moment of Embarrassment, Piper undertook extensive genealogical research into her family ancestry, and found many of these websites to be reliable sources of useful information.

Piper, “On Wearing Three Hats?”

See, for example, Shannon Jackson, Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics (New York: Routledge, 2011); and Bishop, Artificial Hells. It is worth noting that neither of these important scholars has yet have incorporated Piper into their arguments about participatory art.


THE REAL THING
STRANGE¹

ADRIAN PIPER
I would like to thank the British Society of Aesthetics for inviting me to deliver the Empson Lecture at Cambridge University. It is a very great honor. And thanks to all of you for coming to hear this talk. It is a wonderful opportunity to think about my work in a new way, and I promise not to abuse it by descending into a paroxysm of self-indulgent blather about that work!

Instead I would like to lay the groundwork for my later conclusions with a few words about William Empson, the renowned poet and critic who both founded and later dissented from the New Criticism movement in Anglo-American literature. In 1925 Empson won an undergraduate mathematics scholarship to Cambridge. He distinguished himself in both mathematics and English. As he didn’t have the benefit of an APRA Foundation Berlin Multi-Disciplinary Fellowship to encourage the development of both talents (find out more at adrianpiper.com), he ultimately chose English as his major. At the age of twenty-three, he self-published his first collection of poems and his second, groundbreaking work of literary criticism, Seven Types of Ambiguity, when he was twenty-four. Both works were groundbreaking in the clarity, precision, and analytic detachment of their language. For the second, Empson was nominated for a fellowship at Magdalene College.

Shortly thereafter, however, condoms were discovered in his dormitory room, where he was purportedly caught in the act with a lady friend. For this university offense of sexual misconduct, and despite his excellent academic record, Cambridge stripped him of his scholarship, kicked him out of the university and banished him from the city. He moved to Bloomsbury and in 1930 departed to Tokyo to teach. He published his second groundbreaking book of poems and his second, equally revolutionary work of criticism, Some Versions of the Pastoral, in 1935. In 1937 he was kicked out of Japan for making a pass at a cabdriver, and moved on to a teaching position at Peking University—only to be driven out by the Japanese invasion. So instead he traveled in China for two years, itinerantly teaching English poetry entirely from memory. During World War II he was back in London, working alongside George Orwell and T. S. Eliot at the BBC and broadcasting to the Far East. After the war, he returned again to Peking University, where he taught for five years, until increasingly onerous Maoist restrictions on teaching and freedom of expression drove him back to England.
Empson accepted a professorship in the English department at the University of Sheffield in 1953 and remained there as its chair until his retirement, in 1972. With honorary doctorates from the Universities of East Anglia in 1968, Bristol in 1971, and Sheffield in 1974, Cambridge University joined the general acclaim with an honorary doctorate in 1977, roughly fifty years after it had expelled him.

He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth two years later and, with his usual impeccable timing, saluted his friend Orwell one last time by dying in 1984. His serious and long-standing interest in Buddhist philosophy and meditation helped him to navigate the vicissitudes of his life with a mix of equanimity and satirical humor. The *New York Times* describes his prose as “[combining] wisdom with shock value, snappy insults with long-honed insights.” I really like this guy.

So I am truly delighted to be following in Empson's footsteps, at least as regards moving around and getting kicked out of places. But I am also going to try to emulate Empson in some other ways as well. The title of my talk is taken from Empson's poem of the 1940s, "Let It Go," and I shall follow his wise counsel at many points. I will be responding to the very generous request to address in this lecture the relationship between my art work and my philosophy work. I am happy to rise to this challenge, even though I am not publicly discussing my art work at this time. This long-standing policy is fully consistent with the substance of Empson's poem. He says,

It is this deep blankness is the real thing strange.
The more things happen to you the more you can’t
Tell or remember even what they were.
The contradictions cover such a range.
The talk would talk and go so far aslant.
You don’t want madhouse and the whole thing there.³

When asked what this poem was about,
Empson is said to have replied that it was about deciding not to write poetry anymore. I don’t think this is what the poem is about, and I don’t believe Empson thought it was, either. I think he said that in order to get rid of someone who was too lazy to do the work of finding out what the poem was about for himself, by reading it closely, thinking about it deeply, and giving it his own meaning. I think Empson meant to suggest that questions like that one made him want to stop writing poetry. Happily, he changed his mind and went on to write a great deal more.

It is not difficult to understand why he answered as he did. After having communicated and expressed himself in the poem, the question of what the poem was about then called on him to explain at the meta-level what he had already communicated and expressed in the poem. This was tantamount to denying that the poem had expressed and communicated successfully in the first place. Empson’s poem calls our attention to something—this deep blankness—that is ordinarily obfuscated by the compulsion to tell and remember and talk up.

So the request to talk up the poem itself could hardly have been welcome. By using poetic discourse in a way that reveals rather than obscures or tries to pin down the real thing strange, the poem becomes a plea on behalf of the real, and on behalf of the strange. Thus Empson’s answer protected “this deep blankness . . . the real thing strange” from precisely the kind of discussion in which “the talk would talk and go so far aslant” that the work itself would disappear from view.

My decision not to talk it's fine. about my own work is one way of I don't know what you mean. Sheltering the I didn't notice anything wrong. Real thing strange it seems fine to me. From talk that talks I don't know and goes so far aslant. Why you say that. that it obscures I don't see any problem. the real thing strange from view. I'm amazed behind a scrim that you see things that way. of formulaic platitudes I just don't see it that way at all. whose primary function wasn't intentional. In a state of suffocation I don't understand what this is coming from. the cognitive struggle just calm down. that every artwork demands try to get a grip on yourself. of its serious viewers. This is a complete surprise to me. Instead I want to focus the thought never
CROSSED MY MIND. on that struggle itself, I REALLY DON'T KNOW the struggle between WHAT TO MAKE OF THIS. “this deep blankness... ISN'T THIS A LITTLE BIT MUCH?” the real thing strange.” THAT'S A WEIRD WAY TO THINK ABOUT THINGS. and the talk that talks I JUST CAN'T RELATE. and goes very far aslant WE CERTAINLY DO HAVE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON THINGS. indeed. This is a different sort of road YOU'RE MAKING TOO MUCH OF THIS. into the relationship NOTHING'S THE MATTER. between my artwork STOP GETTING EMOTIONAL. and my philosophy work, YOU'RE BLOWING THE WHOLE THING OUT OF PROPORTION. one that avoids the madhouse EVERYTHING'S FINE. and the whole thing there, WHAT DO YOU MEAN? by subjecting the madhouse itself WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? to extended scrutiny. YOU'RE BEING PARANOID. YOU'RE OVERSENSITIVE. YOU'RE READING TOO MUCH INTO IT. 

Here is one such work that I am not going to talk about, but which nevertheless might serve as a fitting expression of that very resolve.

Instead I want to anchor the relationship between my art work and my philosophy work in the text from which my two-volume philosophical work, *Rationality and the Structure of the Self*, takes its inspiration, namely Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. My interest in Kantian themes predates my first encounter with Kant. In 1969 I was an art student. I had written an essay about the artwork I exhibited in

Joseph Kosuth's *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* show at the New York Cultural Center, on the subject of space and time as forms of perception. A philosophy-student friend who read it insisted that I read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, particularly the Transcendental Aesthetic. I have been held captive by the first *Critique* ever since—in art as well as in philosophy.

My captivity to Kant is easy to detect in the second volume of *Rationality and the Structure of the Self*. In the first part of the book, I develop in detail the comprehensive Kantian model of rationality that I claim both structures our thinking and motivates our behavior. In the second part, I try to show how real-life deviations from this model tend to systematically confirm its reliability. But my focus in that work is on the substantive model, and how it must be elaborated in order to accommodate those deviations. Here I want to take a closer look at the deviations themselves—the conceptual, theoretical, and aesthetic anomalies that elicit from the self the cognitive rescue operations I describe there. My account of conceptual and theoretical anomaly is of course indebted to Thomas Kuhn's discussion of anomaly in science. But my appreciation of Kuhn's analysis was schooled by my prior encounter with Kant's more detailed treatment in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

So I am going to turn now to Kant's conjectures about the possibility of unsynthesized intuitions. I shall want to establish that Kant is committed to the existence of unsynthesized intuitions, and then to draw some conclusions about their significance, both for my work and for yours. So you can see that there are some concealed premises here, and that the argument rests on a shameless appeal to Kant's authority! But maybe that will be all right. I hope also to emulate Empson's exemplary practice as a literary critic, of reading an author's text closely and extracting insights from detailed analysis of particular words, phrases, and sentences.

5. Recently a related discussion has developed, both in Kant scholarship and in contemporary philosophy of mind, as to the existence and nature of so-called nonconceptual content. The remarks that follow do not attempt to engage that discussion, because my reaction to it is an instinctively artistic one: of skepticism as to whether such an issue can be settled through conceptual analysis. Kant's account, by contrast, takes for granted the existence of what he would call "unsynthesized intuitions," takes for granted that they have a certain nature, and asks how they influence and relate to higher-order cognitive activity. This question strikes me, as an artist, as a more promising candidate for conceptual analysis.
So let’s look at passage (A). Here Kant is considering whether we can intuit objects without comprehending what it is we are intuiting—or, to use his vocabulary, whether they can appear to us in intuition without satisfying the criteria of synthetic unity required by the understanding. I have divided the text into indicative and subjunctive clauses, so that we can distinguish clearly between the places in which Kant is making factual assertions and the places in which he is entertaining counterfactual possibilities. He says,

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Passage (A)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicative</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) the categories of the understanding do not represent to us the conditions under which objects are given in intuition at all.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) So objects can certainly (allerdings) appear to us,</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) without necessarily having to relate to functions of the understanding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) and therefore without the understanding a priori containing their conditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) For without functions of the understanding, appearances can certainly (allerdings) be given in intuition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) For that objects of sensible intuition must accord with the formal conditions of sensibility lying a priori in the mind is clear,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) because otherwise they would not be objects for us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) But that they furthermore must accord with the conditions that the understanding needs for the synthetic unity of thought is a conclusion that is not so easy to see.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) For appearances could be at best [allenfalls] so constituted,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) that the understanding would not find them in accordance with the conditions of its unity at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) And everything would lay in such confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) that, for example, in the series of appearances nothing would present itself that would provide a rule of synthesis,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) and therefore would correspond to the concept of cause and effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) So this concept would be completely empty, void, and without meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15)Appearances would nevertheless present objects to our intuition,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16) for intuition by no means needs the functions of thought.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Kant mavens present today will notice that my translation of this passage diverges from the standard ones at certain points. Although I do break up several of Kant’s run-on sentences, comparison with the German original will show that my translation is otherwise as literal as possible.

In the indicative mood clauses, Kant’s remarks are based on facts that he takes himself to have established in the Transcendental Aesthetic. At A 19 he defined intuition as that manner or means by which we are in “unmediated relation” to objects. He nowhere specifies in greater detail in what our unmediated relation to objects consists. Instead he argued in the Transcendental Aesthetic that intuition is what locates our representations in space and time. So in Kant’s view, spatiotemporal location is the result of being in unmediated relation to objects, not a precondition of it. This implies that this unmediated relation itself, whatever it is, cannot itself be a spatiotemporal one. And at B 67-69 Kant made explicit the implication that this thesis applies to all empirical representations: in locating representations in space and time, we thereby
locate not only other things but also ourselves as empirical subjects in space and time. Here in passage (A), in clauses (A.2) through (A.4), he now adds that this procedure by which we intuit all such things as spatiotemporal bears no necessary relation to the procedure by which we make sense of them. If there is a relation between what we intuit and what we understand, it must be a contingent one.

Kant then asserts in clause (A.5), and repeats in clause (A.16), that we can definitely intuit objects independently of any higher cognitive functions for conceptualizing them. Such higher functions constitute a separate procedure that organizes spatiotemporal objects into mutual relation, by sorting them into groups according to their most fundamental properties—or, as Kant would put it, by subsuming them under the categories of the understanding. Kant is asserting in clauses (A.2) through (A.5) and (A.16) that intuition is not only conceptually independent of understanding; it is also functionally independent. In Kant’s view in passage (A), we definitely can intuit objects whether or not we comprehend them. Despite the heavy weather that Robert Paul Wolff and others make of passage (A), Kant’s meaning in these clauses seems to me to be quite clear. Whether it is consistent with what he says elsewhere is a separate matter. Kant’s claims here raise prima facie problems for the interpretation of the Transcendental Deduction in both A and B editions that I am going to ignore for purposes of this discussion.

In the subjunctive-mood clauses, Kant then entertains the counterfactual possibility that we might not be able to understand any of the many things to which we directly and immediately relate. It could happen that even the best-constituted appearances might be incomprehensible to us as unified objects. Kant presses this point particularly in clauses (A.9) to (A.10). Call this the worst-case scenario. In the worst-case scenario, not even the most constitutionally sound among our spatiotemporal intuitions would satisfy the conceptual requirements that enable us to make sense of them—for example, by fitting them into a causal network, or by consistently ascribing properties to them in terms of which we can identify them repeatedly over time as enduring objects.

Kant elaborates the worst-case scenario in clauses (A.11) through (A.14): a confusing series of appearances is intuited and spatiotemporally positioned but offers nothing to which the concepts of substance or causality might correctly apply. Such appearances are still situated in time, and they still have spatial location. And we still represent them; here see not only clauses (A.2) and (A.15), but also Kant’s definition of intuition at B 132 as “that representation that can be given prior to all thought.”7 However, we do not represent them as unified objects; and there is no unified self to whom we represent them. For, as Kant tells us in the Subjective Deduction in the A edition, a subject is unified if and only if what appears to it is similarly unified as an object (A 108).8
ACCORDING TO CONCEPTS, I.E. ACCORDING TO RULES, WHICH NOT ONLY MAKE THEM NECESSARILY REPRODUCIBLE,
And he adds in the B Deduction that “the empirical consciousness that accompanies different representations is in itself diverse and without relation to the identity of the subject” (B 133). So to be temporarily incapable of comprehending any of these different representations conceptually is also to lack the unified self that is supposed to do the comprehending. In the worst-case scenario I actually would, as Kant claims, “have as many-colored and diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious to myself” (B 134).

However, the worst-case scenario is even worse than that. Kant reaches his conclusion, in both the A and the B Deductions, after having analyzed only one synthesizing procedure, not two. He has nowhere suggested that there is a first procedure of conceptual organization that unifies the subject and a second one that unifies the object. Rather, there is only one such procedure for systematizing the connections among representations. This single procedure differentiates subject from object, and unifies each. The functions of judgment that enable us consistently to ascribe properties to objects and subsume particulars under concepts are numerically identical to the functions that organize the subject into an internally coherent psychological entity. As he says in passage (B),

(B) [It] is clear that, as we have to do only with the manifold of our representations, and that X (the object) that corresponds to them is nothing to us because it is supposed to be something different from all our representations, the unity that the object makes necessary could be nothing other than the formal unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of representations (KrV, A 105.03–09; italics mine). 11

So for Kant, the unity of the subject and the unity of the object are interdependent in this very strong sense. But we have just seen that according to Kant, the unmediated relation between these strongly interdependent entities cannot itself be a spatiotemporal one, because it is this very relation that engenders the spatiotemporal one. It would seem, then, that this relation is unmediated in a very strong sense indeed: at the precognitive level, there is no spatiotemporal distance, distinction or differentiation between subject and object at all. Here we enter the metaphysically spooky noumenal realm of things in themselves, about which knowledge is in principle impossible and speculation futile.

But the worst-case scenario has unacceptable implications even if we avoid any such speculation. For it implies that there is no way for subjects and objects even to arise. There is no impersonal synthetic cognitive activity that might, from this state, generate discrete, sentient entities that bear spatiotemporal relationships to other such entities. Thus in the worst-case scenario, unsynthesized intuitions foreclose empirical experience of any kind—of self, of action, of objects, of world—altogether. Under these circumstances, mental representations permanently remain in a pre-sorted, undifferentiated state, a “buzzing, blooming confusion,” to use William James’s words. They are like a flurry of postcards that are being continually sent out from some indefinite and unspecified departure point, without any identifiable destination at which they are to be received and sorted. They are intentional, but have neither motive nor purpose.

Now Kant reassures us, in both the A and B Deductions, that we do not need to worry about the worst-case scenario. For in fact it turns out that even appearances must be synthesized, at least at an elementary level, in order for them to be unified as appearances (A 98–99). And the very same functions of judgment that unify perceptual data into appearances are those which also unify appearances into objects (A 105).
An unsynthesized appearance is one that, after all, has been organized at least at the
elementary perceptual level of what Kant calls apprehension (A 99). It remains unsyn-
thesized in the sense that it has not been further sorted and organized at the higher,
more complex levels of conceptual and rational comprehension (A 103). Unsynthesized
appearances are the ones that, on the one hand, do achieve the status of discrete pres-
ences, but for which, on the other, it is an open question whether or not they achieve
the higher cognitive status of comprehensible objects. Kant's aim in the A Deduction is
to explain how, at least in the normal case, apprehension and comprehension function
in tandem to engender the empirical world of objects, events, and states of affairs
with which we are familiar. In order for this empirical world to exist for us, these
appearances can and must satisfy the requirements of comprehensibility that the
understanding imposes (B 138).

So Kant's claim is that if we are to experience appearances as objects, we must
be able to understand them conceptually. However, I find no evidence, either in
passage (A) or elsewhere in the Critique, of a blanket claim that every appearance by
definition must be similarly comprehensible. We can think of such a blanket claim
as descriptive of what we might provisionally call the best-case scenario, in which all
of the representations we intuit, including our representations of ourselves, are orga-
nized by the categories of the understanding into comprehensible objects of thought.
In the best-case scenario, to intuit something is not merely to call the cognitive func-
tions of understanding into operation; it is thereby to secure a conceptual identity and
place for each and every thing we intuit.

However, the best-case scenario is in fact not all that good. For that scenario
implies that we can in principle comprehend everything we can intuit, i.e., that there
is no distinction between the objects that empirically appear to us and the objects we
understand. This just seems wrong, and perhaps most obviously wrong in the case
of trying to understand works of contemporary art. As viewers we are continually
presented with, and moreover expect to be presented with, many things, conditions,
and states of affairs that we do not understand, and therefore can barely register in awareness on a first viewing.

But of course our failures of comprehension are hardly limited to these cases. Nor are they necessarily conditioned by a simple lack of information, education, or sophistication. Sometimes they are conditioned by the limitations of our cognitive capacities themselves—by their limited receptivity, flexibility, scope, depth, strength, or responsiveness. The empirical world just is a lot bigger and more complex than we are, and our creative capacities are a lot more complex and unpredictable than we may think they are. Our curiosity about the unfamiliar is not infinite, and may all too quickly shade into panic or revulsion. A serious commitment to empirical realism requires our acknowledgment of a natural, social, and cultural world that transcends our ability to make sense of it—and, therefore, our acknowledgment of the infinite possible series of given appearances that, in Kant’s analysis of reason, perpetually challenges our higher-level theories to do so. So Kant’s empirical realism needs the distinction between those appearances that are conceptually synthesized by the understanding and those that are not, in order to block the naïve subjectivism that wrongly infers from Kant’s account that we each somehow “construct our own worlds” in any primitively solipsistic sense.

The distinction between synthesized and unsynthesized intuitions is not the same as that between phenomena and noumena. Rather, it is a distinction within the phenomena, between those appearances that we recognize as unified objects and those we merely intuit as spatiotemporally located presences. It is a distinction between two kinds of empirical entity that alerts us to the existence of an empirical world, including an empirical self, that lies beyond the mind’s ability to grasp it. As a matter of principle, Kant cannot tell us in what this larger empirical world consists, any more than he can tell us in what the noumenal world consists. Nor can he say specifically what it is that empirically appears to us in a form that is thus unsuitable to our powers of comprehension. We can only infer from Kant’s analysis of those powers what it is not.
Hence of appearances that do not satisfy the requirements of synthetic unity, Kant says in passage (C) that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage (C)</th>
<th>Passage (A)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) it would be possible for appearances to crowd in upon the soul,</td>
<td>(11) And everything would lay in such confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) and yet to be such as would never allow of experience.</td>
<td>(7) because otherwise they would not be objects for us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Since connection in accordance with universal and necessary laws would be lacking,</td>
<td>(10) that the understanding would not find them in accordance with the conditions of its unity at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) all relation of knowledge to objects would fall away.</td>
<td>(12) that, for example, in the series of appearances nothing would present itself that would provide a rule of synthesis,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) The appearances might, indeed, constitute intuition without thought, but not knowledge;</td>
<td>(13) and therefore would correspond to the concept of cause and effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) and consequently would be for us as good as nothing.</td>
<td>(14) So this concept would be completely empty, void, and without meaning.</td>
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As we can see in the table, Kant in passage (C) is reprising and concluding the argument he offered in passage (A). Clause (C.1) recapitulates clauses (A.11) and (A.15), on the possibility of intuiting unsorted and unrecognizable presences. (C.2) condenses (A.7)'s and (A.10)'s denial that we could consciously experience such presences. (C.3) reprises (A.12) to (A.13) on the irregularity, unpredictability, and disconnectedness of such presences. (C.4) elaborates (A.14)'s inference to the state of cognitive vacuity that would result. And (C.5) summarily acknowledges in the subjunctive mood the same
point Kant has already asserted in indicative-mood clauses (A.2), (A.3), (A.5), and (A.16), that intuition is conceptually and functionally independent of understanding. Finally, clause (C.6) drives this now expanded argument to its conclusion: that even if unsynthesized intuitions might indeed exist, they nevertheless "would be for us as good as nothing." To this he later adds that they "would be nothing to me" (B 132)\(^{13}\) and "would not belong to any experience, therefore would be without an object, and nothing but a blind play of representations, that is, less even than a dream" (A 112).\(^{14}\)

I suggested earlier that the systematic relation between intuition and understanding must be a contingent one for Kant. We have also seen that this relation is contingent on the presupposition of unified experience: if we as coherent subjects are to have a coherent experience of whatever it is we intuit, that intuition itself must be cognitively coherent. But this does not entail that intuitions that violate this presupposition by definition do not exist. What we see from a comparison of passages (A) and (C) is that Kant means to acknowledge the possibility of unsynthesized intuitions on the one hand, yet to deny their cognitive significance on the other: yes, they might exist, he admits, but where they do, they are cognitively unimportant. I think Kant was wrong about this, and I shall shortly try to explain why.

In the actual-case scenario, then, some intuitions are synthetically unified, whereas others are not. The actual-case scenario is that in which Kant's description of the worst-case scenario in clauses (A.10) to (A.15) and (C.1) to (C.5) holds only for a limited class of intuitions. As we have already seen, unsynthesized intuitions are those collections of representations that are unified into appearances by the elementary operation of apprehension, but not further unified and classified into recognizable objects by the advanced operations of comprehension. Although we have sorted these representations into discrete presences that are situated in space and exist in time, we have not succeeded in applying to them the higher-order functions of the understanding that enable us to recognize them as part of the world of objects, events, and states of affairs with which we are familiar.

So Kant's use of the term "object" in passage (A) to refer to these presences is erroneous and premature. From now on, in order to refer to unsynthesized intuitions, I am going to replace Kant's talk of "objects" in passage (A) with Empson's striking term "things," in order to express the perspectival and noncommittal stance of the subject for whom unsynthesized intuitions do not necessarily ever achieve unified objecthood. The first stanza of Empson's poem rightly suggests that whether or not such a thing can or ever does achieve the status of a recognizable object must remain a moot question.

I have also already indicated my fondness for Empson's observation that "it is this deep blankness is the real thing strange." This first line of the poem contains at least two senses of the term "real": a comparative sense and an absolute sense. First, it surveys and evaluates the unlimited range of strange things that happen to one. There is, on the one side, the overwhelming and seemingly endless avalanche of strange things and happenings that multiply and mutate unpredictably. We can see even from my brief introductory narrative of Empson's life that it was an ongoing proliferation of "things [and events] strange" from very early on. Virtually nothing in his life turned out as he had probably expected. Empson's account of the cognitive effect of such a proliferation is exactly right:

The more things happen to you the more you can't
Tell or remember even what they were.

13. Das: Ich denke, muß alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten können; denn sonst würde etwas in mir vorgestellt werden, was gar nicht gedacht werden könnte, welches ebensoviel heißt, als
die Vorstellung würde entweder unmöglich, oder wenigstens für mich nichts sein. KrV, B 131.16, B 132.01-04.

If the confrontation with one such thing suspends mental functioning for a long moment, repeated confrontation with a succession of such things suspends it for a succession of long moments. That succession of moments is lost not only to the possibility of concept subsumption, i.e., identification; it is thereby also lost to the possibility of concept retention and recall. The momentary inability to consistently ascribe a predicate to the thing equally forecloses the possibility of locating it under the concept that predicate denotes, and therefore of searching for the particular that instantiates that concept in order call it up at a later point. "You can’t tell or remember even what things were," because the things themselves stubbornly and repeatedly defy your ability to tell what they are. "The contradictions cover such a range" because whether the predicate or its negation applies to the thing changes from moment to moment. As ineffable presences, anomalous things of all kinds deepen that deep blankness even more, and fill it with their strangeness.

On the other side, there is the culmination of that process of increasing speechlessness in response to those strange things and happenings: "this deep blankness" that is really strange. Yes, a seemingly unending proliferation of strange things that happen to one overtaxes one’s ability to capture them in concepts, words, or memory. But the real thing strange is the deep blankness that results from that moment, when the mind is so saturated with unfamiliarity that cognitive functioning is suspended altogether.

I submit that the "deep blankness" Empson describes in this opening line of "Let It Go" refers to the same state that Kant describes in clauses (A.14) and (C.4), in which an anomalous presence appears in our vicinity: we intuit it, but it fails to behave in accordance with our conventional expectations of cause and effect—producing in us a state of conceptual nullity, a cessation of cognitive functioning, as Kant says, "completely empty, void, and without meaning." The difference between Kant’s and Empson’s approach is that Kant regards this state of cognitive suspension negatively. For him, it is a moment of confusion and vacancy, mental stasis, a harbinger of the
progressive intellectual deterioration and dementia that marred the last decade of his life. So he discounts and belittles it even in theory.

By contrast, Empson’s sensitivity to his own creative process as a poet, together with his deep engagement with Buddhist philosophy and meditation, lead him to regard this state with interest and respect: as a conceptual silence, a moment of stillness and repose, an alert but wordless mindfulness brought forth by the presence of the unfamiliar, relative to which “the talk that talks” and goes “so far aslant” is an object of ridicule and revulsion. Empson’s poem identifies “this deep blankness” as itself “the real thing strange”—stranger than all of the multiplicity of strange things
that “happen to you,” overwhelming your ability to “tell or remember even what they were.” It is this moment of profound incomprehension, of speechless, ineffable cognitive shutdown, more powerful than the unending avalanche of events that assault the outer limits of the mind’s ability to process them, that itself commands his fascination—just the opposite of Kant’s dismissive attitude.

But as is true for Kant, Empson’s “deep blankness” achieves its depth only through the intuitive presences it reveals—and can reveal only when the mind is quiet, shocked into silence by what is so unfamiliar that none of the words or concepts in one’s cache are adequate to capture it. Here we arrive at the second meaning of the word “real” in Empson’s poem: its allusion to an absolute empirical reality that disturbs our awareness even as it defies our futile attempts to capture it in thought. In the second volume of *Rationality and the Structure of the Self,* my analyses of conceptual, theoretical, and aesthetic anomaly stipulate that the relationship between what Empson calls “the real thing strange” and “this deep blankness” is one of cause and effect: that it is the anomaly that causes the cognitive paralysis. But my account does not violate Empson’s insight that it is the deep blankness, the moment of temporarily arrested cognitive functioning, that itself affords us access to the hidden reality of the strange and unfamiliar things that engender it. The things may cause the blankness, but it is the blankness that reveals the things—the unfamiliar phenomena, the experiential anomalies that temporarily suspend the ongoing functions of conceptualization, and that we therefore fail to cognitively recognize at all.

The things that provoke these reactions are the real things that are given to us and affect us without commanding our conscious comprehension. In Kant’s characterization of the worst-case scenario in passages (A) and (C), unsynthesized intuitions comprise spatiotemporally located things, states, and occurrences that transform arbitrarily. They go in and out of our purview unpredictably, without any discernible
systematic connection to other such things, states, and occurrences that are undergo­ing their own metamorphoses. These metamorphoses themselves are so fleeting and unstable that they make impossible a consistent ascription of properties to particular objects, and therefore a consistent identification and differentiation of such objects in terms of their properties. For the usual mechanisms by which we make sense of objects—seeking out their causal connections with other familiar objects and events, ascribing to them some of the same properties by which we identify other objects and events, situating them in familiar contexts through their properties and relations—are brought to a standstill. The failure of these organizing mechanisms releases into the mind a flood of things and presences and events with which it has no resources to cope. Unsynthesized intuitions inherently constitute a state of confusion and disorgan­ization that the subject is perceiving, and therefore a condition of psychological confusion and disorganization in the subject herself.

Unsynthesized intuitions may be either third-personal or first-personal, depending on whether we locate them spatially as outside us or as inside us. In the third-personal case, we are passive spectators to those things and happenings that are located outside us, where arbitrarily given visual, tactile, and auditory occurrences, sense-data, forms, and ideas are in direct and intimate proximity to us, filling our awareness and indeed temporarily capsizing it. And in the first-personal case, we are also passive instruments of those unsynthesized intuitions that are located inside us, where other sorts of visual, tactile, and auditory occurrences, sense-data, forms, and ideas are also in direct and intimate proximity to us; where mental events, thoughts, images, impulses, and premonitions are given in an arbitrary and shifting temporal sequence that disrupts, paralyzes, or fragments purposeful action. We are passive in both the third-personal and the first-personal cases because of the disruption of intentional agency both conditions effect.

Let's take the third-personal case first. Earlier I mentioned Kant's conclu­sion at A 108 that the subject is coherently unified if and only if the object is similarly coherently unified by a set of concepts that meaningfully and consistently organize experience. I also noted in discussing passage (B) Kant's stipulation
of a single synthetic procedure that differentiates subject from object, and unifies each. The implication for his account of third-personal unsynthesized intuition is clear, and terrifying: these unsynthesized presences do not merely “crowd in upon the soul,” as Kant describes. They threaten to overtake and decompose the soul back into the unsorted mass of representations with which it began; to obliterate the distinction between subject and object; and to dissolve the subject as an independent psychological entity into the very things that he fails to understand. With that loss of differentiation go observational distance, spatiotemporal and social orientation, perspective, self-definition, detachment, and objectivity as well. Indeed everything that enables one to distinguish oneself psychologically as an identifiable agent is, for that moment or succession of moments, lost, dissolved into the object.

But the first-personal case is no different, because, as we have just seen, the very presence of unsynthesized intuitions, wherever they come from, undermines the distinction between these two standpoints. Things and presences and happenings and states that well up or appear or burst forth or compel goal-directed activity that seems paradoxically without discernible purpose are no less threatening to the psychological integrity and boundaries of the self when they possess one than they are when they confront one. In both cases, then, unsynthesized intuitions loosen our grip on our subjectivity and our agency, because the unstable spatiotemporality of these things and happenings and states render our discreteness and self-differentiation as subjects equally unstable. So our confrontation with these things is nameless and disorienting, regardless of whether we are viewing them or producing them out of ourselves.

Now this talk was supposed to be about the relation between my art work and my philosophy work, and perhaps you are wondering what all that I’ve said so far has to do with it. The answer is that I have been showing you what that relation is. I have been doing the philosophical work, and bringing to bear some of the philosophical work I have already done, on the project of directing you to that place in the mind where my art work lives and where you have to live and be comfortable, if you want to meet any contemporary artwork, including mine, on its own territory. And I have been showing you just a few of the real things strange you will find if you explore that territory. This is the territory that stretches beyond the reach of conceptualization and convention, beyond the reach of favored tags such as art vs. non-art and good art vs. bad art and art vs. craft and art vs. nature—and therefore far beyond Kant’s third Critique conception of the free play of the cognitive faculties in a universally communicable judgment of taste.\(^\text{15}\) For this territory extends further into the deep regions of the mind than the limitations of judgment, language, intellect, or self can comfortably contain.

To be at home in this place means to be comfortable with unsynthesized intuitions: with unfamiliar things and happenings and states and presences that confound and silence the mind and decompose the ego. This is the place you are called on to visit if you want to get acquainted with a contemporary artwork at the intuitive level I have been discussing. Empson rightly locates the “madhouse” not here, in the direct and unmediated, indexical, and intuitive relation to the thing, but rather “in the whole thing there,” in the conceptually unified but mediated relation, where “the contradictions cover such a range,” and where “the talk would talk and go so far aslant.” The madhouse he rejects is not unsynthesized intuition, but rather the premature attempt to verbalize it.

Cultivating a direct and unmediated relation to unsynthesized intuition on its own terms is not a sufficient condition for finally understanding it. But it is a necessary condition. It is necessary to seek out that anomalous presence beyond the edge of awareness that defies integration into conscious experience. And it is necessary

to become comfortable with the bewildered state of wordless confusion, anxiety, and conceptual and conative disorientation it effects. This is the state of vigilant alertness that maximizes receptivity to whatever the real thing strange has to offer.

Of course it is also open to you to skip that part, and proceed directly to a different project, of trying to capture the thing intellectually, by relying on wall labels and museum tours and reviews and other people’s comments and discussions and analyses—indeed, analyses of precisely the sort to which I have just subjected Empson’s poem—in order to classify the work under its proper conceptual headings. In these cases, higher-level cognition is little more than a vacuous wheel-spinning operation, without connection to the road beneath the wheels. But this also is not enough for understanding, as Kant reminds us in passage (D):

(D) Without sensibility no object would be given to us, and without understanding none would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind. It is therefore just as necessary to make the concepts of the object sensible (that is, to add to them the object in intuition), as to make the intuitions of the object comprehensible (that is, to bring them under concepts). . . . Only through their union can knowledge arise (KrV, A 51.16–32, B 75.17–B 76.01). 16

So Kant’s point, and Empson’s point, and mine, is that no talk that talks can substitute for direct, unguarded, and sustained exposure to the intuitive presence of the artwork on terms that cannot be talked at all. Once you have ventured that far, you can let those wall labels go.

16. Ohne Sinnlichkeit würde uns kein Gegenstand gegeben, und ohne Verstand keiner gedacht werden. Gedanken ohne Inhalt sind leer, Anschauungen ohne Begriffe sind blind. Daher ist es ebenso notwendig, seine Begriffe sinnlich zu machen (d.i. ihnen den Gegenstand in der Anschauung beizufügen), als seine Anschauungen sich verständlich zu machen (d.i. sie unter Begriffe zu bringen). . . . Nur daraus, daß sie sich vereinigen, kann Erkenntnis entspringen (KrV, A 51.16–32, B 75.17–B 76.01).

Thanks.
Page 73: William Empson, 1930s

Page 74 (top): T. S. Eliot (third from left), George Orwell (fourth from left), William Empson (third from right), and others, 1942

Page 74 (bottom): William Empson, 1950s

Page 75 (top): William Empson, 1965

Page 75 (bottom): William Empson, 1980s

Page 76: Adrian Piper. Decide Who You Are: Right-Hand (Constant) Panel. 1992. Screenprinted image and text on paper, mounted on foam core, 72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm). Various public and private collections


Page 78: Adrian Piper. Hypothesis: Situation #4. 1968–69. Typescript page on mimeographed paper; gelatin silver prints and ink on graph paper; and two photolithograph pages, 11 x 8 ½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); 10⅞ x 40⅞ in. (27.9 x 103.2 cm); and each 11 x 8 ½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm). Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 81: Adrian Piper. The Mythic Being: A 108. 1975. Oil crayon on six gelatin silver prints, each 25⅞ x 17⅞ in. (64.7 x 45 cm). Collection Candace King Weir

Page 83 (left): Adrian Piper. Self-Portrait Exaggerating My Negroid Features. 1981. Pencil on paper, 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.3 cm). The Eileen Harris Norton Collection

Page 83 (right): Adrian Piper. Vanilla Nightmares #7. 1986. Charcoal on newspaper, 23⅞ x 13⅞ in. (60.6 x 34.9 cm). Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, North Carolina. Museum purchase with funds from the Benefactors Fund


Page 87: Adrian Piper. Everything #8. 2006. Mixed-medium installation for KBH Kunsthall, Copenhagen. Vitrine with glass, mirrors, and stenciled text on pedestal, 46 in. x 6 ft. 4 ¾ in. x 32⅞ in. (117 x 200 x 83 cm). Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 88: Adrian Piper. Everything #1. 2003. Printed text on paper, 11 x 8 ½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm). Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 89: Adrian Piper. The Spurious Life-Death Distinction (Part II of The Pac-Man Trilogy). 2006. Animated video (color, sound), 00:45:00. Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin. Detail: video still at 00:05:36

Page 90: Adrian Piper. Shattered Thinker. 1967. Pencil on paper, 8 ½ x 5 ½ in. (21.6 cm x 14 cm). Private collection, U.S.A.

Page 92: Adrian Piper. The Humming Room. 2012. Exhibition instruction. Pencil on graph paper with digital additions, 8 ½ x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm). Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

All works by Adrian Piper © 2018 Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Catalysis IV © 2018 Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin and Generali Foundation
LSD Mirror Self-Portrait, 1965
Charcoal and colored pencil on paper
22 ½ × 17 ¼ in. (57.2 × 43.8 cm)
Collection Liz and Eric Lefkofsky
LSD Alice [Study for Alice Down the Rabbit Hole]. 1965
Felt-tip pen, ballpoint pen, and pencil on paper
11 3/8 × 9 in. (30 × 22.8 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Negative Self-Portrait. 1966
Felt-tip pen on paper
17 1/4 x 14 3/4 in. (45 x 37.5 cm)
Emi Fontana Collection

LSD Self-Portrait from the Inside Out. 1966
Acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm)
Emi Fontana Collection
Over the Edge. 1965
Oil on canvas
24 7/8 × 18 7/8 in. (62.6 × 47.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
LSD Womb. 1965
Acrylic on canvas
26 x 26 in. (66 x 66 cm)
Emi Fontana Collection
LSD Void. 1966
Acrylic on canvas
26 × 40 in. (66 × 101.6 cm)
Emi Fontana Collection
LSD Self-Portrait with Tamiko. 1966
Acrylic on canvas
40% × 30% in. (103 × 77 cm)
Private collection
LSD Bloodstream. 1965
Acrylic on canvas
12 x 12 in. (30.5 x 30.5 cm)
Collection Simona & Francesco Fantinelli
Alice in Wonderland: Alice and the Pack of Cards. 1966
Tempera on canvas board
24 × 18 in. (61 × 45.7 cm)
Collection Konrad Baumgartner, Milan

Alice in Wonderland: The Mad Hatter’s Tea Party. 1966
Tempera on canvas board
24 × 18 in. (61 × 45.7 cm)
Collection Konrad Baumgartner, Milan

Alice in Wonderland: Alice Down the Rabbit Hole. 1966
Tempera on canvas board
24 × 18 in. (61 × 45.7 cm)
Collection Konrad Baumgartner, Milan
Over the Edge 1 (Study). 1967
Pencil on notebook paper
4⅝ × 8⅝ in. (10.4 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Over the Edge 2 (Study). 1967
Pencil on notebook paper
9 × 6⅜ in. (22.8 × 17.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Over the Edge 3 (Study). 1967
Pencil on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.4 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Untitled Planes Painting. 1966
Acrylic on wood, mounted on acrylic on canvas
18 × 24 in. (45.7 × 61 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Self-Portrait at Age 5 with Doll. 1966
Oil on canvas with doll
29 ¾ × 19 ¾ in. (75.5 × 50.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Barbara Epstein and Doll. 1966
Acrylic on canvas with doll
41 1/2 x 41 in. (105.7 x 104.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
The Barbie Doll Drawings, 1967
Rapidograph pen, ink, and/or pencil on thirty-five sheets of notebook paper
Each 8½ × 5½ in. (21.6 × 14 cm)
The Barbie Doll Drawings. 1967 (see page 108)

Details:
Barbie Doll Drawing #1
Barbie Doll Drawing #33
Untitled Self-Portrait. 1967 (later signed "1968")
Pencil and charcoal on paper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Sands and Robin Murray-Wassink, WASSINIQUE INC., Amsterdam
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #1, 1967
Pencil on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #5, 1967
Pencil and charcoal on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Louise Fishman
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #6, 1967
Cut-and-pasted paper, pencil, charcoal, and pastel on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #8. 1967
Cut-and-pasted paper and pencil on notebook paper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #11, 1967
Cut-and-pasted paper and pencil on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #16. 1967
Cut-and-pasted paper and pastel on notebook paper
11 × 8 1/2 in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #17, 1967
Cut-and-pasted paper and pencil on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Gregory R. Miller and Michael Wiener
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #24, 1967
Felt-tip pen on graph paper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #25. 1967
Gouache on graph paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #27, 1967  
Gouache on graph paper  
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)  
Collection Gregory R. Miller and Michael Wiener
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #33. 1967
Pencil on notebook paper
11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #46. 1967
Cut-and-pasted paper bag, charcoal, and pencil on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Judith Rothschild Foundation Contemporary Drawings Collection Gift
(purchase, and gift, in part, of The Eileen and Michael Cohen Collection)
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #47. 1967
Pencil and charcoal on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #49, 1967
Pastel on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #48, 1967
Pencil on notebook paper in plastic sleeve with crayon
11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Judith Rothschild Foundation Contemporary Drawings Collection Gift
(purchase, and gift, in part, of The Eileen and Michael Cohen Collection)
Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #51, 1967
Pencil and pastel on notebook paper
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Recessed Square, 1967
Masonite on wood frame (refabricated 2017)
36 × 36 × 9 in. (91.4 × 91.4 × 22.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Double Recess, 1967
Masonite, wood frame, gesso, paint, and metallic paint (refabricated 2017)
36 x 60 x 6 in. (91.4 x 152.4 x 15.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Sixteen Permutations of a Nine-Part Floating Square. 1968
Pencil on graph paper and tape
22 × 22 in. (55.9 × 55.9 cm)
Collection Gregory R. Miller and Michael Wiener
Nine-Part Floating Square. 1967
Pencil and gesso on nine canvases, with pencil on wall
Each canvas 24½ x 24½ in. (62.2 x 62.2 cm); overall 66 x 66 in. (167.6 x 167.6 cm)
Collection Gregory R. Miller and Michael Wiener
A Three-Dimensional Representation of Infinite Divisibility, 1968
Pencil and colored pencil on graph paper
17⅝ × 22¼ in. (44.4 × 56.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Infinitely Divisible Floor Construction. 1968
Mixed-medium installation. Tape and particle board (refabricated 2002)
47¼ in. × 13 ft. 9 ¾ in. (120 x 420 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
3-2-1 Cube 3-2-1 Cube (Permutations on a Suspended Cube). 1968
Colored ink, colored pencil, and pencil on graph paper
15 × 22 ¼ in. (38.1 × 56.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Here and Now. 1968
Cardboard portfolio with text on graph paper and text on mimeographed paper
taped to box; and text on sixty-four loose sheets of mimeographed paper
Each sheet 9 x 9 in. (22.9 x 22.9 cm)
Collection Alan Gravitz and Shashi Caudill
Details:
frontispiece
page 1

systems page
page 12
Sixteen Permutations of a Planar Analysis of a Square. 1968
Mixed-medium installation. Photostat and wood model
Photostat 32¼ x 21⅞ in. (83.5 x 55.5 cm); model 10¾ x 10⅞ x 8½ in. (27 x 26.4 x 20.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: scale model
Utah-Manhattan Transfer, 1968
Pencil and ballpoint pen on cut-and-pasted maps, mounted on two pieces of foam core
First panel 13¼ × 14½ in. (33.7 × 36 cm); second panel 12 × 12 in. (30.5 × 30.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Parallel Grid Proposal for Dugway Proving Grounds Headquarters. 1968
Two typescript pages; ink and colored ink on fourteen sheets of paper; architectural tape on acetate over ink on thirteen photostats; and ink on cut-and-pasted map, mounted on colored paper
Twenty-five sheets each 8½ × 11 in. (21.6 × 27.9 cm); two sheets each 8½ × 12½ in. (21.6 × 32.2 cm); and three sheets each 11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Beth Rudin DeWoody
Five Unrelated Time Pieces (Meat into Meat). 1968
Notebook with typescript page, eight photographs, and text mounted on colored paper
Each page 9 ½ x 11 ½ in. (24.1 x 29.2 cm) or 11 ½ x 9 ½ in. (29.2 x 24.1 cm)
Collection Paul & Karen McCarthy
Hypothesis: Situation #6, 1968-69
Typescript on mimeographed paper; gelatin silver prints and ink on graph paper; and two photolithograph pages
11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); 11 x 16 in. (27.9 x 45.4 cm); and each 11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund
Some space constitutes available to objects of sensory consciousness at a given instant:
1. Individual objects.
2. Located environments (e.g., before locations).
3. Composite asses: independent single objects, combinations of dependent objects (e.g., chairs, tables, walls, doors, windows, etc.).
4. Dependent single objects: parts of composite asses (e.g., a leg of a table).
5. Details of any of the above not existing independently (e.g., the print in a newspaper).
6. A combination of any of the above.

Some time constitutes available to objects of sensory consciousness at a given moment:
1. Days.
2. Hours.
3. Half hours, quarter hours.
4. Minutes.
5. Seconds.
6. A combination of any of the above.

Some contexts are open-ended. They may be indefinitely extended by adding increasingly inclusive or exclusive conditions.

These uses in a specific situation, a context may be isolated from its identifying context (location, etc.).

Since the space and time constitutes are in constant flux, any work (sensory consciousness situation) entered into by an individual cannot be repeated. Context and situation are at the same time continuously alive and never in the same state. They are therefore used to record the occurrence of each situation.

Adrian Piper
Relocated Planes I: Indoor Series, 6/69. 1969
Notebook with six typescript pages; ballpoint pen on four typescript pages; twelve photostats of architectural tape on acetate over photograph on paper; and cut-and-pasted text on twelve sheets of colored paper
Each page approx. 11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Relocated Planes II: Outdoor Series
Notebook with six typescript pages; ballpoint pen on four typescript pages; twelve photostats of architectural tape on acetate over photograph on paper; and cut-and-pasted text on twelve sheets of colored paper
Each page approx. 11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Concrete Infinity 6-inch Square ["This square should be read as a whole...", 1968
Typescript page in square mat
Page 11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Collection Alan Cravitz and Shashi Caudill
"This work begins when the caller of this number is connected to this speaker. The duration of this work may be determined in any one of the following ways:

1) The connection may be broken at any time during this monologue.
2) The connection may be broken immediately after the termination of this monologue.
3) The connection may be broken after an uncertain number of repetitions of this monologue.

Variations on the duration of this work are determined by the caller of this number."

"Lines formed by the delivery of this monologue have, or connecting points, the various locations of each listener.

The duration of this work are:
- Along the Northeast side, the line between the locations of the listener at the greatest distance South of this speaker, and the listener at the greatest distance East of this speaker.
- Along the Southeast side, the line between the locations of the listener at the greatest distance East of the speaker, and the listener at the greatest distance South of this speaker.
- Along the Southwest side, the line between the locations of the listener at the greatest distance South of this speaker, and the listener at the greatest distance West of this speaker.
- Along the Northwest side, the line between the locations of the listener at the greatest distance West of this speaker, and the listener at the greatest distance North of this speaker.

The locations of these four listeners are points which connect to form the area of this work."
Art Sale-Event

To be given at a gallery which possesses the following qualifications:
- well-lit
- conveniently located
- available on a Saturday afternoon during the later hours, say between 3 and 5 P.M.

During the two-hour event, cardboard cubes measuring 4" along the sides will be sold at 25¢ each. Each will be stamped with time, date, and location of sale. There are two one-hour shifts in which one salesperson operates at a time. The salespeople used should know nothing about the event other than that they have been asked to sell this particular commodity. Exact time of sale is constituted by when money is handed across table. Each salesperson should be accompanied by one other person whose job is to note exact time of sale and stamp cube.
Taped Lecture on Seriation (given November 7, 1968)

A recorded half hour of the daylight savings time announcement available on the telephone. Announcement is interrupted by disconnection at two-minute intervals. Number therefore has to be continually redialed. This operation takes approximately ten seconds to perform—the same length of time needed to make a single announcement, and is recorded as part of lecture. The half hour recorded should coincide with the time of presentation.

seriation: "...the analysis of any action into serial components...

—George Kubler, The Shape of Time
(series: "a number of similar things or persons arranged in a row or coming after one another."—Webster's New World Dictionary)

The choice of the time announcement was directed toward giving a direct experience of the duration of the half hour. The continuity of the announcement throughout the half hour unifies it as an action performed in time. The primary unit of seriation is ten seconds; the announcements are given at ten second intervals, describe ten seconds of time, and are interrupted by ten seconds of dialing. The half hour is further subdivided by the interruptions of the continuity of the announcements by the disconnection. The secondary serial components, then, are alternately two minutes, ten seconds, two minutes, ten seconds, etc.
If you are a slow reader, it will take you approximately five seconds to read this sentence.

If, on the other hand, you are a fast reader, it will very likely take you the same amount of time to read this sentence, since it has more words in it, in addition to a few subordinate clauses.

If you are an average reader, you must set up a ratio of the number of words in the first sentence over the time it takes a slow reader to read it (five seconds) to the number of words in the first sentence over the time it would take a fast reader to read them (unknown quantity x), solve the ratio, add the two times, divide the sum by two, divide the dividend (the average time obtained) into the same original number of words, multiply the new dividend by the total number of words in this sentence, and you will then know how long it has taken you to read this sentence.
The time needed to read a line of print depends on the content & structure of the line:

1) monotonous monotonous monotonous monotonous monotonous
2) linear Read more quickly than which th ere are some irregular
3) lines in which there are more—NECESSITIES(?)—for "punctuation", take MUCH longer!
4) sometimes have as punctuation at all and take even longer if essential properly understand them
5) When you, reading this, are personally addressed, I'll bet you read pretty slowly
6) as compared to the time given to a line which doesn't address anyone in particular.
7) Concerning specific instances in which supermultisyllables are quasiutilized
8) they do not read as fast as when words of one sound are used, or sound as smooth.
The piece stands in a ratio of 1:3 to its designated space and is situated to the right center of it. It is further characterized by the continuity of its internal parts of which there are 75. These parts are being divisible into a number of distinct categories which are internally distributed throughout the total area of the piece. In order to supplement the basically logical structure of it, an acquaintance of this structure is vital.
The upper surface area of this white, rectangular object is 8½" x 11". Directly above it is a second rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the second is a third rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the third is a fourth rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the fourth is a fifth rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the fifth is a sixth rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the sixth is a seventh rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the seventh is an eighth rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the eighth is a ninth rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the ninth is a tenth rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the tenth is an eleventh rectangle of the same color and dimensions. Directly above the eleventh is a twelfth rectangle of the same color and dimensions. 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Seriation #2 (Now) (November 11, 1968)

A taped 20-minute segment divided into 5-minute intervals.

In the first 5-minute interval, the word "NOW" is repeated once every minute.

"second" "third" "fourth" continuously.

The word "NOW" takes approximately 1.5 seconds to say.

Each 5-minute interval is accompanied by a slide which is flashed on during the 1.5 seconds when the word "NOW" is being said. The slides contain the following information:

#1
(aera)
NOW:1.5 seconds / not-NOW: negligible

#2
(aera)
NOW:1.5 seconds / not-NOW: negligible

#3
(aera)
NOW:1.5 seconds / not-NOW: negligible

#4
(aera)
NOW:1.5 seconds / not-NOW: negligible
Text of a Piece for Larry Weiner, 1/14/69 (1969), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces.

Three typescript pages; and ballpoint pen on graph paper (Note: This work was made for the artist Lawrence Weiner.)
Maps schematizing different elements existing in Manhattan were selected for use. Specifically chosen were:
1. a street map
2. a bus routes map
3. a subway routes map
4. a zip code area map

On each map, all areas representing various types of systematic obstructions in above-ground three dimensional space were cancelled, i.e.
1. On the street map, all blocks were cancelled (map #1).
2. On the bus routes map, all streets functioning as bus routes were cancelled (map #2).
3. On the subway routes map, all streets with subway stations plus a one street radius of these streets were cancelled. Subway routes per se were not cancelled because they do not function in above-ground three dimensional space (map #3).
4. On the zip code area map, all intersections were cancelled (map #4).

All schematic symbols of systematic spatial obstructions in the form of building elevations, traffic, restrictions, or postal entities were in this way eliminated. Other obstructions are random and/or unpredictable, and were therefore ignored.

The alteration of the maps culminated to represent the area of Manhattan as it actually is: a two dimensional geometric plane. In this context, the remaining streets shown on this plane represent unobstructed geometric line segments which exist only on the surface of the plane (map #3).

The length of each segment is determined according to the street map scale: $5\text{\,in} = 3\text{\,miles}$.

Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces. 1968-69
Notebook with eight pageworks. Ring binder with twenty-nine sheets in plastic sleeves
Each page 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); binder 11 1/4 x 10 3/4 x 1 1/2 in. (30 x 26.8 x 3.9 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Main Street Point</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>W. 109</td>
<td>Riverside Dr.</td>
<td>1 m, 120'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>W. 117</td>
<td>Riverside Dr.</td>
<td>1 m, 970'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>W. 125</td>
<td>PS. Washington Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 1320'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>W. 129</td>
<td>Fifth Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 3600'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>R. 130</td>
<td>Fifth Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 2800'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>R. 109</td>
<td>Fifth Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 4500'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>W. 119</td>
<td>Morningside Dr.</td>
<td>1 m, 5100'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>W. 92</td>
<td>Riverside Dr.</td>
<td>1 m, 5100'</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>W. 91</td>
<td>Fifth Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 5100'</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>R. 81</td>
<td>PS. Dr.</td>
<td>1 m, 5100'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>R. 80</td>
<td>PS. Dr.</td>
<td>1 m, 5100'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>W. 77</td>
<td>Riverside Dr.</td>
<td>1 m, 4600'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>W. 76</td>
<td>Central Pl. W.</td>
<td>1 m, 4600'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>N. 36</td>
<td>Twelfth Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 3100'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>N. 25</td>
<td>Sixth Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 1800'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>N. 21</td>
<td>Sixth Ave.</td>
<td>1 m, 1900'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>West St.</td>
<td>1 m, 3000'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The top side of the following page represents a void space of undefined dimensions.
Over it is centered an area measuring $3 7/8 \times 4 7/8$ inches.

The top side of the preceding page represents a void space of undefined dimensions.
Over it is centered an area measuring $2 7/8 \times 2 7/8$ inches.
First page following: A 300 sq. mile area partially defining its surrounding
toll space.
Second page following: Underlining corrective

Typescript page; and cut-and-pasted paper on onionskin paper over graph paper with text (graph paper not reproduced)
Proposal: to exhibit this piece whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Adrian Piper
February 10, 1969
Street Works: Friday, April 18, 1969, 5 - 6 PM

designated block: 13th - 14th Sts./5th - 6th Aves.

**Proposal #1**
1. On Friday, April 11 from 4:30 to 6:30 PM, walk around outer sidewalk boundaries across the street from designated block.

Record 1200 ft. of tape at 1 7/8 IPS (two hours) of undifferentiated noise.

2. On Friday, April 18 from 5 to 6 PM, walk around inner sidewalk boundaries on designated block.

Play back previously-recorded undifferentiated noise at 3 3/4 IPS (one hour).

**Proposal #2**

1. Take one photo from each of the following locations with a polaroid camera:

   #1 - four blocks N of designated block: S side of W, 18th St. between 5th and 6th Aves., midpoint of block.

   #2 - four blocks W of designated block: W side of 3rd Ave. between W, 13th and 14th Sts., midpoint of block.

   #3 - four blocks S of designated block: N side of W, 9th St. between 5th and 6th Aves., midpoint of block.

   #4 - four blocks E of designated block: E side of Washington St. between E, 13th and 14th Sts., midpoint of block.

2. On Friday, April 18, at 5 PM, attach photo #1 to S side W, 14th St. between 5th and 6th Aves. at midpoint of block.

   " #2 to W side 5th Ave. between W, 13th and 14th Sts."

   " #3 to N side W, 13th St. between 5th and 6th Aves."

   " #4 to E side 6th Ave. between W, 13th and 14th Sts."

**Proposal #3** (for nine participants)

participant #1: Bike around designated block from 5 to 6 PM.

   " #2: Run

   " #3: Walk

   " #4: Bike

   " #5: Run

   " #6: Walk

   " #7: Bike

   " #8: Run

   " #9: Walk

**Proposal #4**

Distribute this page on 14th St. between 5th and 6th Aves. from 5 to 6 PM.

**Proposal #5**

Locate designated block on a New York City streetmap. Divide block crosswise into four equal sections. Extend perpendicular lines to edges of map.

Using lines as guide, cut map into four unequal rectangles. Each rectangle will contain one corner of designated block.

Indicate corner of block on each section of map. Identify each section of map by the location of that corner in space (NW, NE, SW, SE). Attach each section to corresponding corner of actual block.

Adrian Piper

**carried out**
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 9</td>
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<td>zero</td>
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0 to 9 (for Vito Acconci) (1969), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces. Typescript page
Art

Continued from preceding page

autobiographical. If one reports one's reactions to a work of art—or to life—rather than describing or analyzing, it is one's sensitivity and one's truthfulness that determines the worth of this confession.

But back to the panel discussion. First of all the panelists did not arrive at the appointed time. Charlotte Moorman filled in the gap by sitting on the stage all wrapped up in pink cloth, as was her cello. By 9 o'clock I began to think that the bastards had really done it and that the rascals were not going to arrive at all. I toyed around with the idea and felt comfortable with it and felt it appropriate given the announced topic, so at 0.05, when they began filing in, I was a little disappointed. It was an incestuous panel, just as this is, I suppose, an incestuous column. The panel: David Bourdon (Life magazine), was the moderator and was joined by Ultra Violet, Brigid Polk (of Cock-book fame), Walter Gutman, John de Menil, Gregory Battcock, Lil Picard, and Andy Warhol, who was introduced by Bourdon as a young man impersonating a rather well-known artist. Throughout Andy did not say a word, but occasionally used his Polaroid. To make a long story short, thanks to Bourdon's cool and sometimes cruel wit, everything was light-hearted and fairly entertaining. At one point Brigid took off her blouse. Gregory exposed his cock to Warhol's camera, forgetting that those in the balcony could see what was going on and began shouting "How big is it?"

This was the third in a series of panels organized or disorganized by Jill and, yes, the topic "The..."
The area on the reverse surface of this card is a 1:114 enlargement of coordinates rectangle (5, 6), p. 81, 0 TO 9 Magazine, July, 1969.

It has been relocated to:

Kynaston McShine
43 2 Lafayette St.
N.Y.C.
791 N. 3rd


The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York
Thursday 10/5/69
Object: 3" x 3/8" square x 1/100" thick.
White walls made of surface.
Glossy top surface. Color areas:
whites: 2 sq. % evenly distributed around edge of
top surface; approximately 1/4 sq. % randomly
distributed over top surface in 1 irregular shape.
off-white: approximately 3/8 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 15 irregular shapes.
light grey: approximately 3 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 25 irregular shapes.
medium grey: approximately 2 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 25 irregular shapes.
dark grey: approximately 3 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 30 irregular shapes.
black: approximately 1 sq. % randomly distributed
over top surface in 6 irregular shapes.

Friday 10/5/69
Object: 3" x 3/8" square x 1/100" thick.
White walls made of surface.
Glossy top surface. Color areas:
whites: 2 sq. % evenly distributed around edge of
top surface; approximately 1/4 sq. % randomly dist-
ributed over top surface in 1 irregular shape.
off-white: approximately 3/8 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 15 irregular shapes.
light grey: approximately 3 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 25 irregular shapes.
medium grey: approximately 2 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 25 irregular shapes.
dark grey: approximately 3 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 30 irregular shapes.
black: approximately 1 sq. % randomly distributed
over top surface in 6 irregular shapes.

Monday 10/8/69
Object: 3" x 3/8" square x 1/100" thick.
White walls made of surface.
Glossy top surface. Color areas:
whites: 2 sq. % evenly distributed around edge of
top surface.
off-white: approximately 3 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 16 irregular shapes.
light grey: approximately 3/8 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 10 irregular shapes.
medium grey: approximately 2 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 22 irregular shapes.
dark grey: approximately 3/8 sq. % randomly distrib-
ted over top surface in 18 irregular shapes.
black: approximately 1 sq. % randomly distributed
over top surface in 6 irregular shapes.
Context #7

You (the viewer) are requested to write, draw, or otherwise indicate any response suggested by this situation (this statement, the blank notebook and pen, the museum context, your immediate state of mind, etc.) in the pages of the notebook beneath this sign.

The information entered in the notebook will not be altered or utilized in any way.
Free all political prisoners!
The Panthers are prisoners of war, and their trial properly belongs before the U.N. Committee on Colonialism and Racism.
I was fined $25 for failure to report a change of address on any driving license. My hair is long and my skin is not white. Whites still believe that my pain is only for redlining and a driving ticket is $25.
Bobby Seale is being appealed for a murder in Huey Newton. We will fight to the full extent of possible for the lower (i.e. the Supreme Court) If we still do not get justice, we will level the earth on the large, motherfucking country! Power!!

You know, Clyde, the exhibits better when you're stoned.
Yeah
So is life.
Untitled Performance at Max's Kansas City. 1970
Documentation of the performance. Four gelatin silver prints
Each 3\(\frac{3}{4}\) × 3\(\frac{3}{4}\) in. (9 × 9 cm)
Photographs by Rosemary Mayer
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Catalysis III (6/70)
Street Performance, New York City
[see Talking to Myself: The Ongoing Autobiography of an Art Object]

Catalysis Ill. 1970
Documentation of the performance.
Two gelatin silver prints and text mounted on colored paper
Overall 8½ × 11 in. (21.6 × 27.9 cm)
Photographs by Rosemary Mayer
Collection Thomas Erben, New York
Catalysis IV (1970-71)
Street Performance, New York City
[see Talking to Myself: The Ongoing Autobiography of an Art Object]
Self & Oper. ops

Write everything I do. Temp & weight on rising & going to bed. Picture three a day.

No suspect.

Our ops / sainence.

No incoming information. Environmental conditions, sanitary input (raw, heated, success, fouled, tasted) read: OK.

Restrict content whenever possible.
Concrete Infinity Documentation Piece. 1970
Handwritten text on notebook paper; and black-and-white photographs and handwritten text on fifty-six sheets of graph paper
Each sheet 10 ¾ x 8 ½ in. (27.3 x 21.6 cm)
The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Purchased with funds provided by the Drawings Committee
Detail (left): Untitled ("Object maintenance")
Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

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Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70

Monday 6/1/70
for fermentation: mixed juice, steeped orange and grapefruit juice. Washed up. Balled up. Whole, weighed 110. went to bed at 10:40 PM. Body temperature 97.5°F.
and that too by those who have nothing very convincing to say against the doctrine of the ideality of space, is this. They have no expectation of being able to prove apodictically the absolute reality of space; for they are confronted by idealism, which teaches that the reality of outer objects does not allow of strict proof. On the other hand, the reality of the object of our inner sense (the reality of myself and my state) is, [they argue,] immediately evident through consciousness. The former may be merely an illusion; the latter is, on their view, undeniably something real. What they have failed, however, to recognise is that both are in the same position; in neither case can their reality as representations be questioned, and in both cases they belong only to appearance, which always has two sides, the one by which the object is viewed in and by itself (without regard to the mode of intuition, its nature therefore remaining always problematic), the other by which the form of the intuition of this object is taken into account. This form is not to be looked for in the object in itself, but in the subject to which the object appears; nevertheless, it belongs really and necessarily to the appearance of this object.

Time and space are, therefore, two sources of knowledge, from which bodies of a priori synthetic knowledge can be derived. (Pure mathematics is a brilliant example of such knowledge, especially as regards space and its relations.) Time and space, taken together, are the pure forms of all sensible intuition, and so are what make a priori synthetic propositions possible. But these a priori sources of knowledge, being merely conditions of our sensibility, just by this very fact determine their own limits, namely, that they apply to objects only in so far as objects are viewed as appearances, and do not present things as they are in themselves. This is the sole field of their validity; should we pass beyond it, no objective use can be made of them. (This ideality of space and time leaves, however, the certainty of empirical knowledge unaffected, for we are equally sure of it, whether these forms necessarily inhere in things in themselves or only in our intuition of them. Those, on the other hand, who maintain the absolute reality of space and time, whether as

1[Reading, with Laas, Adickes, and Vahlinger, Ideality for Realists]
Food for the Spirit. 1971 (see page 186)
Detail: pages 24 and 25
Food for the Spirit. 1971
Fourteen gelatin silver prints (reprinted 1997)
Each 14¾ × 14¾ in. (37 × 37.7 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Family of Man Fund
The Mythic Being, Village Voice Ads, 1973-75
Advertisements appearing in the Village Voice. Seventeen newspaper pages
Each 17 x 14 in. (43.2 x 35.6 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchased with funds provided by Donald L. Bryant, Jr., Agnes Gund, Marlene Hess and James D. Zirin, Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis, Donald B. Marron, The Edward John Noble Foundation, Katherine Farley and Jerry Speyer, and Committee on Drawings Funds in honor of Kathy Fuld
Detail: The Mythic Being, Cycle 1: 9/21/61. September 27, 1973
Culture Shock

by Annette Kahn

IN THE HEYDAY of old master buying at the turn of the century and into the '80s, no painting bought was considered complete without a portfolio of expertises—dog-eared photos, their backs covered with illegible scrawls by unknown European museum officials or prolific but not necessarily profound scholars. One could decipher phrases like "bellini figura, "el dibujo, "el Maestro’s Hand," and perhaps the artistic signature of the certifying authority. These expertises rarely meant anything to anyone except the buyer, who was as impressed with European culture as his wife and daughter were with European aristocracy.

So a great many paintings with a great many expertises attesting to the hand of a famous master final round. Indeed, you could still buy one from certain scholars and impoverished museum officials. But it meant nothing to almost anyone except the totally naive collector.

So where do you, the owner of a painting with a great name attached to it, go for verification? You can persuade some museums to give you a verbal discourse on your painting. You can go to Park-Bernet and get a written appraisal of worth, but no great scholarly examination. Or you can go to the International Foundation for Art Research. Give them all the information you have on your painting and they will issue a report either confirming what you already know or telling you the bad news—the work is nowhere near as good as you thought it was. The examination costs $100 plus expenses per object. the fee covering a technical analysis where needed, a provenance check, and the hardest test of all: a submission to the appropriate conservators—such people as Louis Goldenberg, president of Wildenstein, Harry Bober, medievalist at NYU’s Institute of Fine Arts, John Rewald, 18th century specialist at City University, Bernard Buttermere, classicist at the Brooklyn Museum, and many other impressive people of the academic, museum, and gallery world here and abroad.

This sleuthing in the murky field of art must be fun for the advisers. They get to handle art, discuss it, and ultimately cover themselves—because the resulting report is issued in the name of the foundation, not the individual specialist. Art Research is non-profit, and its services are available to anyone who has a serious piece of art. So if you are courageous and can stand bad news about your masterpiece, get in touch with International Foundation for Art Research. Old Madison Avenue. New York City 10016.

WHAT DO WAGNER, Mederwell, Liechtenstein, Singh, Kelly, Hayter, Musson, Lieberman, Oldenburg, Stella, Rauschenberg, and Johns have in common? You guessed it: They all love Meyer Schapiro. Meyer Schapiro, mind is one of the four or five greatest art historians ever. He is a semanticist, political activist, social historian, he can talk and draw and teach, and out of two apples construct a whole universe. Some people think he is a magician. His friends have made him a portfolio of prints, which will be on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in October. The museum is located somewhere between Columbia University, where Meyer Schapiro teaches, and the rest of the world, which it is his study.

IN ALL THE FLAPS Nixon has raised, he has never gotten a rise out of the cultural establishment. He never invited great artists to the White House as Kennedy did. He never turned down portraits of himself as Johnson did. Yet he is generous with the arts.

When Nixon became President in 1968, appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts, started in 1966, were around $3.5 million per year. By 1972 they were some $20.7 million, and they are now running 60-7 million. This is a most amazing and civilized jump—from $7 to $80 million—and attributable in great part to the minks-on, straight-arrow determination of Nancy Hanks, an ex-Rockefeller staffer, and for the Nixon years, chairman of the NEA.

Detail:
The Mythic Being, Cycle I: 7/14/71. July 25, 1974
The Mythic Being, 1973
Video excerpted from Other Than Art's Sake (1973), by Peter Kennedy. 16mm film transferred to video (black and white, sound), 00:08:00
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Details:
video still at 00:03:53
video still at 00:06:20
IT IS ONLY BECAUSE OF THE
DEFECTS IN MY PERSONALITY THAT
I CAN FINALLY SAY THIS TO YOU. I AM
PROTECTED AND STRENGTHENED BY MY
INADEQUACY. I AM SECURE, SMUGLY
SECURE, FOR MY PERSONAL FLAWS
WILL CONSTITUTE A MORE THAN ADE-
QUATE DEFENSE AGAINST WHATEVER
YOUR RESPONSE MIGHT BE TO
WHAT I HAVE TO SAY TO
YOU.

FOR MY IMPERFECTION
MAINTAINS AN UNBRIDGABLE
CHASM BETWEEN US; IT PROTECTS US
BOTH FROM EACH OTHER, BUT MOST
IMPORTANTLY, ME FROM YOU. THE DE-
FECT I HAVE IN MIND IS THAT I CAN-
NOT LOVE YOU, WILL NEVER BE
ABLE TO LOVE YOU. WHERE THERE
MIGHT HAVE BEEN FEELING,
THERE IS ONLY IMPERSONAL
INTEREST.

The Mythic Being: I/You (Her), 1974
Gouache, tempera, and cut-and-pasted paper labels on ten black-and-white enlarged photographs
Each 8 x 5 in. (20.3 cm x 12.7 cm)
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund
YOU HURT ME, AND BETRAYED MY TRUST, AND FOR THAT I WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU. IN FACT, I WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN THAT YOU SEE YOURSELF AS I DO, WITH THE CONTENPT THAT I DO, BECAUSE OF YOU, THERE IS A COLDNESS IN ME, A SUSPICIOUSNESS TOWARDS YOU IN ALL YOUR GUises, ALL YOUR APPEARANCES. BECAUSE OF YOU I WITHHOLD MY FEELINGS, FOR I COULD NEVER TRUST YOU NOT TO TREAD ALL OVER THEM.

I WANT YOU TO REALIZE WHAT YOU'VE DONE, AND BE REALLY ASHAMED. ASHAMED OF YOUR CONCEIT, YOUR SELFISHNESS, YOUR MEANNESS, YOUR INSENSITIVITY. UNDERSTAND THE EXTENT OF YOUR CARELESSNESS, AND HATE YOURSELF FOR IT. REGRET, EVEN MORE THAN I DO, THE REAL FRIEND YOU MIGHT HAVE HAD.
I MIGHT REASON WITH YOU, SHARE WITH YOU; EVEN EXTEND AN OFFER OF HELP OR SUPPORT; I MIGHT INDULGE WITH PLEASURE IN LOVEMAKING FANTASIES ABOUT YOU, BUT YOU WILL NEVER ELICIT AN EMOTIONAL COMMITMENT FROM ME. TAKE CARE THAT YOU ASK OF ME NO MORE THAN THAT WE LAUGH TOGETHER; FOR YOU WILL BE DISAPPOINTED, IF YOU DO.

AFTER YOU, I FOUND SOLACE IN FRIENDSHIPS WITH MEN; AFTER THAT, I HEALED MYSELF IN SOLITUDE. WHATSOEVER REGRETS I FEEL ABOUT THIS ARE SMALL TO ME NOW, AND READILY TRANSFORMED INTO ANGER AND RESENTMENT TOWARDS YOU. AS YOU WELL KNOW, OUR ENMITY IS ULTIMATELY YOUR DOING AND YOUR CHOICE.
NOW I HAVE LEARNED TO THRIVE ON IT; I MUST, IN ORDER TO PROTECT MYSELF, AND THUS I ALIENATE YOU IN TURN. OUR FEMININITY ITSELF CAN NEVER AGAIN BE A POINT OF CONTACT BETWEEN US. I PERCEIVE THAT NOW, YOU ARE NO MORE CAPABLE OF TRUSTING ME THAN I AM OF TRUSTING YOU, AND I CRY FOR OUR MUTUAL IMPOVERISHMENT: THAT, AT LEAST, WE CAN SHARE.

BUT I INSIST AGAIN THAT THIS IS YOUR DOING, YOUR FAULT, YOUR CHOICE—NOT MINE. I INSIST THAT FROM THE FACT OF MY APPEARANCE YOU JUMPED TO THE WRONG CONCLUSION, AS YOU ALWAYS DO. YOU INSTINCTIVELY PERCEIVE ME AS THE ENEMY, AND NOTHING I SAY OR DO IS SUFFICIENT TO CHANGE THAT. YOU PUNISH ME FOR HOW I LOOK, WHEN THAT IS BOTH IRRELEVANT AND OUT OF MY CONTROL.
You automatically assume that I neither need nor want your friendship, nor would be willing to work for it, even though you have no reason to think this, no reason to assume anything at all. For if you had only given me the chance, I would have shown you where my loyalties lay.

But you took me off guard once, and it was very painful. I will never give you the opportunity to do that again. My defenses have solidified; there's nothing I can do. It sickens me to realize that I have grown incapable of overcoming the distance between us. I hate you for doing this to me, and myself for allowing it to happen.
The Mythic Being: Dancing, 1974
Fourteen gelatin silver prints
Each 10 × 8 in. (25.4 × 20.3 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Details:
photograph #1
photograph #11
photograph #4
photograph #8
BE SURE TO ATTEND VERY CAREFULLY TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY TO YOU. FOR IF YOU DO NOT, I WILL MAKE A SINCERE EFFORT TO KILL YOU.

TAKE CARE THAT YOU DO NOT INTERRUPT ME BEFORE I AM FINISHED. FOR THAT WILL INDICATE TO ME THAT YOU WERE NOT PAYING CAREFUL ATTENTION TO WHAT I WAS SAYING.

ALSO BE CAREFUL NOT TO NOD TOO RAPIDLY, AVERT YOUR EYES TOO OFTEN, YAWN, BLINK, HUM, OR SIGH DEEPLY. I WILL NOT TOLERATE IT. I WILL MAKE YOU WISH YOU HADN'T.

YOU WILL REGRET EVEN MY NOTICING THAT YOUR EYES ARE GLAZING OVER WHILE I TRY TO EXPLAIN TO YOU. YOU WILL BE SORRY BECAUSE THESE SIGNS WILL PREVENT MY EXPLAINING WHAT YOU WANT ME TO EXPLAIN.

AND THEN WE WILL BOTH BE WORSE OFF: YOU, BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT UNDERSTAND MY SILENCE; I, BECAUSE I WILL NOT TRUST YOU WITH MY THOUGHTS.

WE WILL CONFRONT EACH OTHER AS ALIENS: HOSTILE, BECAUSE WE EVIDENCE ONLY OUR MUTUAL INDIFFERENCE.
The Mythic Being: I Embody Everything You Most Hate and Fear. 1975
Oil crayon on gelatin silver print
8 × 10 in. (20.3 × 25.4 cm)
Collection Thomas Erben, New York
The Mythic Being: I Am the Locus #1-5. 1975
Oil crayon on five gelatin silver prints
Each 8 × 10 in. (20.3 × 25.4 cm)
Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago. Purchase, gift of Carl Rungius, by exchange
WITH MOIST, FLESHY, PULSATING SURFACES

GET OUT OF MY WAY, ASSHOLE
The Mythic Being: 108. 1975
Oil crayon on six gelatin silver prints
Each 25 ½ x 17¾ in. (64.7 x 45 cm)
Collection Candace King Weir
According to concepts, i.e., according to rules, which not only make them necessarily reproducible, but also in doing so determine an object for their intuition, i.e., the concept of something wherein they are necessarily interconnected.
The Mythic Being: Cruising White Women. 1975
Documentation of the performance. Three gelatin silver prints
Each 8 x 10 in. (20.3 x 25.4 cm)
The Eileen Harris Norton Collection
The pending eviction of 30 mostly Hispanic families was protested Jan. 30 in front of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the New York City church that is trying to force the people out of their homes.

The 30 families served with eviction notices live in one of three buildings on Manhattan's upper west side that have been occupied by the tenants for the last six and one-half years. The Morningside Housing Corp., a coalition of churches in the area led by St. John's, has been trying since 1970 to tear down the tenements and build a high-rise home for the elderly on the site.

The threatened families and their supporters who demonstrated outside the immense cathedral demanded that low-income housing for persons of all ages be constructed on the site, explained Juan Esdel, one of the tenants facing eviction.

The removal of the working-class residents has been fought in court over the years, but the Episcopalian cathedral has now obtained an eviction order that can be carried out anytime after Feb. 2. "We're not leaving," Esdel declared. "We'll stay and fight—we've learned how to do that. This time we'll fight harder."

After picketing outside the cathedral, the families entered the church during the Sunday service. The minister, in the midst of his sermon, said St. John's was not to blame for the evictions. He then led the congregation in a prayer for the poor.
Art for the Art World Surface Pattern. 1976
Mixed-medium installation. Constructed wood environment, custom-printed wallpaper, stenciled text, audio, and naked light bulb
7 ft. × 60 in. × 60 in. (213.4 × 152.4 × 152.4 cm)
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Purchase through a gift of Shawn and Brook Byers
Some Reflective Surfaces. 1975-76
Two gelatin silver prints and 16mm film transferred to video (color, sound), 00:15:27
Prints 19 ½ x 15 in. (49.5 x 38.1 cm) and 15 x 19 ½ in. (38.1 x 49.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Details:
print #2
video still at 00:00:52
Aspects of the Liberal Dilemma. 1978
Mixed-medium installation. Black-and-white photograph framed under Plexiglas, audio, and lighting
Photograph 18 × 18 in. (45.7 × 45.7 cm); installation dimensions variable
University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. Gift of the Peter Norton Family Foundation
Detail: photograph
It's Just Art. 1980
Documentation and video reconstruction of the performance at Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, Wednesday, April 23, 1980. Video (color, sound), 00:24:42; monitor; photolithograph; ink on notebook paper; ink and cut-and-pasted paper on fifteen gelatin silver prints; and ink and cut-and-pasted paper on three sheets of colored paper Poster 14¾ x 10⅞ in. (35.9 x 27.5 cm); diagram 8½ x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm); each print 11¾ x 8⅞ in. (30 x 21 cm); each collage 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.3 cm)
Installation view
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
220

It was in third grade that I started having real trouble, with math, with gym
, with everything . That was when I began to get sick almost every day, and h
ad to be sent home from school.
The reason was that there was a girl in my c
lass named Claudia who made me wish I were dead . Claudia looked a lot like m
e . We were both skinny and had long br own hair, which we wore in braids, and
large brown eyes with long eyelashes . Claudia was much prettier
than me. Bu
t she was envious of me because ' Julie was at that time my best friend, and Ju
lie was the most popular gi rl in the class.
Julie was a tomboy . She was als
o very smart . She read the New York Times eve ry mor ning and discussed its co
ntents with her father over breakfast . All the girls wanted to be like her a
nd and all the boys really respected her.
Soon after the term began, Julies
tarted ignoring me. In fact , all the girls in the class ignored me. When I
said something to any of them it was just as though I weren't there.
Except
that they would all sit together at lunch two or three tables away from me an
d whisper to each other and stare at me and giggle . I didn't understand what
was going on . I felt miserable all the time.
I cried a lot and stopped doin
g homework and daydreamed in class and couldn ' t think.
At home I watched TV
constantly,
and played sick so I could stay home and liste n to radio soap ope
ras like "Our Gal Sunday," and "One Man's Family."
I read comic books and no
vels and made up a best friend who was a tomboy named Gorky . To be in school
was a nightmare.
Then one day a really crazy boy in the class threw a tantru
m and injured me by hitting me in the stomach with a chair.
I started to cry
Julie came over and apologized to me for how she had acted, and everyone e
lse followed her and confessed what had been going on . Claudia had started a
n H.A. Club with all the girls in the class.
"H.A." stood for "Hate Adrian . "
The rules of the club were that everyone had to swear to ignore me; to preten
d to be whispering bad things about me to each other when I was around; to ma
ke nasty jokes about me that I could hear; and to recruit as many boys as pos
sible int o the club . The membership of the club was growing rapidly when the
y decided to dissolve it . But by fourth grade Julie and Claudia were best fr
iends anyway. I was mostly home being sick and not around to sus tain our fri
endship . Lizzy and I became best friends around sixth grade . She was also v
ery popula r, and very pretty.
She had already seduced one of my boyfriends,
Michael, away from me. But it hadn't bothered me since I hadn't cared for hi
m much anyway. Our friendship
lasted until I discovered that after sweari ng
all our mutual friends to silence , she had been dating my current boyfriend R
obbie behind my back for a yea r , while I had been confiding in her about want
ing to break up with him but not wanting to hurt his feelings . After I found
out the truth Lizzy turned all the girls in our crowd against me. I stopped
being invited to their houses.
I stopped going to their parties.
I ate lune
h with the "unpopular" girls and no one asked me why. After that I largely t
urned outside school for my friends . My next best friend was Marie, whom Im
et when my parents moved to Riverside Drive . Marie was part black, too (alth
.ough she told everyone she was!!ian
and enezuelan~) and very interesting
and exotic-looking.
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PoJitical

Political Self -Portrait #1 (Sex). 1979
Photostat
29 % x 19% in. (75.3 x 49.9 cm)
Collection Margaret and Daniel S. Loeb

Self-Portrait

#1

@ Adrian Piper

1979


My folks had to send me away to camp when I was five because they both had to work. I didn't want to leave me alone in that apartment, which was a girls' camp for the children of practicing Protestants called Camp Good Hope. I had a friend named Karl who was sixteen and came from the boys' camp across the lake. He played catch and volleyball with me and took me to the zoo. Once he brought me a chimp. I told someone that he was my big brother (I'm an only child) and she said that's impossible; Karl's white and you're colored. She said Colored. I didn't know what she meant. Karl and I went out for a little color. I was almost fainting. In conference with my parents she once asked them Does Adrian know she's colored? I guess she must have thought I was too fresh and uppity for a little colored girl. My folks transfer me to another class but it was too near the end of the term. Nancy Modiano was one of the few whites who overtly bullied me because of my color. The others were white philosophy students later in life who hated me and said you don't have to worry about graduate school; a black woman can get in anywhere, even if she looks like you. But as I got older and prettier white people generally got nice and nice, especially when my folks moved out of Harlem when I was fourteen, and into a mixed neighborhood on Riverdale Drive because there were so contentious, and besides the boys in my old neighborhood of white kids whom I could tell them of my skin color. In my new neighborhood I hung out with a Puerto Rican gang that accepted me pretty well and taught me to curse in Spanish. I didn't see New Lincoln people very much because they were my mother's old neighbors and were really getting into being black. And I made other friends when I started going to the Art Students' League and Greenwich Village. I noticed that all my friends were white. And I didn't have much of my parents' social light-skinned, middle class, well-to-do black friends. They seemed to have a very determined self-consciousness about being colored (they said Colored) that I didn't share. They thought it was a shame that I went out with white men. I felt just as alienated from whites as blacks, but whites made me feel good about my looks rather than apologetic. When someone asked me why I looked so pretty, I'd say I'm West Indian (my mother is Indian) or if they looked really interested I would go on at length about my family tree: how my mother's family is Indian, Indian from the children's village who were the children of the poor colored people who worked on the plantation and the rich ones didn't want to acknowledge any African blood in the family; but how for the poor ones it was a matter of honor after the Civil War not to pass for white. But I would never say anything as though I was conforming something, like the Black Experience, which I haven't had. I've had the Gray Experience. Also I felt guilty about unjustified taking advantage of justified white liberties. I thought I was really a screw because I understood how blacks are a matter of pride and honor for my folks to positively affirm their heritage and I don't want to deny a part of myself that I'm proud of. But sometimes I wonder why I was caught in this in the first place; why I should have to be dishonest regardless of whether I affirm or deny that I'm black; and whether, my family, and all such hybrids aren't being victimized by the fact that we're not white. I feel that forcing up and accepting an essentially black and alienating identity as biracially groups us with the most oppressed and powerless segment of the society (black blacks), in order to avoid having that segment teased, caricatured, and to keep someone's sources of political and economic power from whites through the fact successful integration of which we hybrids are the products and the victims. When I think about that I realize that in reality I've been bullied by whites as well as blacks for the last three hundred years, and there is no end in sight.

Political Self-Portrait #2

© Adrian Piper

June 1978
For a long time I didn't realize we were poor at all. We lived in that part of
Harlem called Sugar Hill, where there were lots of parks and big houses th
had once been mansions but had then been converted into hotels or funeral
homes. When I was little it was nice. Boys didn't start littering in the hall-
way of my building singing four-part harmony until I was around eight. Af-
ter that it got scary very quickly. Around the same time many of the girls in
school started wearing shoes from Pappagallo's and coats from Bonwit Teller's.
Suddenly I began to notice that they all had maids and doormen and lived in
apartments bigger than my whole building. I hadn't noticed it before because
it hadn't determined who was popular before. Before it had been how smart
and nice and good at sports you were. Nobody had cared about where they bought
their clothes, or how many servants they had. It was difficult, but beca-
se I was an only child, my parents could keep up with a lot of this. My mothe-
r had a very good, steady job as a secretary at City College, and my father
had a very lucrative real estate practice in Harlem, where people practi-
ced for defending them against unscrupulous landlords by sending his shirts or co-
oking things for him or fitting his car. My parents spent all their money
on me. They put me through twelve years of New Lincoln (a fancy private prep
school). They gave me ballet and modern dance classes at Columbia University.
I took piano lessons first from a neighbor, and later from a teacher at Juil-
liard. I got art lessons from the Museum of Modern Art and the Art Students' 
League. I even got a coat from Bonwit Teller's. Although my mother usu-
ally took me on shopping trips only to places like Macy's or Gimbel's, I dre-
sed as well as anyone else in the class and was invited to all the parties a
nd had cute white boyfriends. But I became ashamed to invite people over or
have my boyfriends pick me up because I lived so far away and my mother
and everyone in it seemed so alien and sinister next to my rich white New Lin-
coll friends. I could have stood not having any servants if we at least
had had a big apartment in a large building with an awning and a doorman.
At least in summer. The final blow came when I was eleven. I had been
strung by my house and neighborhood to give a party although all the other p
opular kids in my class had. So I had started noticing all the advertised va-
cant apartments on Fifth Avenue, Park Avenue, and Central Park West as I came
home from visiting my friends who lived there. And one day I said to my moth-
er, Why don't we move? I just saw a sign for a lovely twelve-room apart-
m on Fifth Avenue and Eighty-Sixth Street, and it's so small and dark and crown
ed ed in so many other ways and bitter laugh and said, Get that
idea out of your head right now. We don't move to Fifth Avenue because we do
nt and never will have that kind of money. I was shocked and didn't believe
her at first. I thought she was just in a bad mood the way she always was when
I was eleven. And she was that way because she just didn't want me to have them. But when I brought it up again, carefully, a few
days later, she saw that I really didn't understand. She explained very pat-
tiently and carefully that we lived where we did because we had to, not beca-
use we wanted to. She explained about Daddy's deciding to serve his country
and getting paid in apple pies and embroidered shirts when he got paid at all,
and about how many weeks of a secretary's salary a coat from Bonwit Teller'
s would have cost us. I was stunned. I became very depressed. Reality began to look very different after that. I started becoming more and more estranged from my sch-
ool friends. I saw that I would never be able to keep up with them economi-
ically and was almost relieved to drop out of the race. I realized that all the
money and titles and possessions and the obedient world in which I had lived never existed. I began to see that I had tried so hard to emulate them. I began dress-
ing very simple clothes, and spent time at home listening to classical music
and reading novels rather than going to school parties. I found that I didn't miss those parties at all. I spent a lot of my free time in li-
braries and museums. I became reflective and started to keep a journal. Tha-
t was when I began to understand the choices and sacrifices my parents had ma-
de in order to educate me, and the inner resources they had insisted that I d
velop. Those resources became a refuge for me now. I learned to be self-su-
fficient, and to revel in my solitude. But by that time my self-image had be-
en too strongly affected and formed by my school associations, as much as by
the complexities of my total environment. I still have times I can't afford
to satisfy except by getting into debt, which I do, and then feel simultane-
ously guilty and frustrated for having them. My standard of living seems to me
excessive for an artist and an academic, even though I know I would find any
thing less barren and depressing. I dream unrealistically of the political an-
deconomic purgatory of the ascetic's life, and of the revolution which will red-
istribute the wealth my classmates so undeservedly enjoyed. I fear having mo-
re money, because I know my tastes for books, records, art, clothes, and travel
will increase, and that, with none of the extra cash I now get to support that revolution. I watch with detached anxiety as I sink further into the mor-
ass of proliferating material desires at the same time as I ascend the ladder
of material affluence. And my radical political sentiments seem cheap for th-
I asking my generation.
PORTRAIT

All sentient species are biologically programmed to attack alien enemies. Some species are programmed to attack their own members as alien enemies. Rats, for example, will attack, kill or even cannibalize one another under conditions of overcrowding and deprivation. But human beings are more unique still. Only human beings are capable of self-destruction, of suicide, of acts that have our own self-obliteration as a conscious purpose.

Human beings must view themselves as alien enemies to be able to do this. They must believe that if they allow this alien enemy to exist, it will destroy them. And so to avoid destroying themselves they destroy themselves.

We can see why this might be so. We do not know ourselves very well. Often we feel assailed by unacceptable thoughts and impulses, and move to suppress them; or shamed by unacceptable physical features, and work to remove them; or threatened by others' unacceptable behavior or appearance, and so attack or reject them. We view these things as alien enemies, not as the familiar ingrained parts of ourselves they are. And so we are constantly moved to destroy and reconstitute ourselves in conformity with our truncated and distorted self-image.

In all these cases, and others like them, we fail to recognize that we are destroying ourselves. And so our centrally motivating urge to self-destruction itself goes unrecognized. Perhaps we wouldn't recognize this particular facet of ourselves if it stared us in the face.

© Adrian Piper 1983

Nagasaki, August 9, 1945, three minutes after the bombing. The smoke column has reached 20,000 feet. (Hiroshima-Nagasaki Publishing Committee. U.S. Army returned materials.)
Pencil on paper
10 × 8 in. (25.4 × 20.3 cm)
The Eileen Harris Norton Collection
Self-Portrait as a Nice White Lady. 1995
Oil crayon on black-and-white photograph
10 × 8 in. (25.4 × 20.3 cm)
Phillip Zohn. 1966
Charcoal on paper
21 × 17 in. (53.3 × 43.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Here's how I remember
Pontus Hultén one week
after the NET conference,
although I haven't managed at
all to do justice to his massive
and menacing features. He
gripped his hands
tightly as he talked, to keep them
from trembling.

© Piper 10/10/82

$10.00 / Hour Drawing of Pontus Hultén. 1982
Pencil on paper
12 × 8 ¾ in. (30.5 × 22.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
An Open Letter to Donald Kuspit (Kuspit Extermination Fantasy). 1987
Pencil on paper
12 x 9 in. (30.4 x 22.8 cm)
University of Colorado Art Museum, Boulder. Gift of the artist
An Open Letter to Donald Kuspit (Kuspit Strangulation Fantasy). 1987
Pencil on paper
12 x 9 in. (30.4 x 22.8 cm)
University of Colorado Art Museum, Boulder. Gift of the artist
Adrian Piper

FUNK LESSONS
A Collaborative Experiment in Cross-Cultural Transfusion

Presented by:
New Langton Arts
1246 Folsom St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
Telephone: (415) 626-5416

8 pm. Friday, March 23, 1984

(run)
Funk is dead. Funk is something you can learn in school.
—Morris Day

Adrian Piper
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Have Rhythm, Will Travel

This work is supported by a National Endowment for the Arts Visual Artists Fellowship, 1982

Funk Lessons Direct Mail Advertisement. 1983
Letterpress card with gold leaf
5⅞ x 8¼ in. (14.6 x 22.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Funk Lessons. 1983–84
Documentation of the group performance at University of California, Berkeley,
November 6, 1983. Color photograph
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
A Tale of Avarice and Poverty, 1985
Six texts and enlarged gelatin silver print
Each text 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); photograph 37 1/4 x 25 1/4 in. (94.6 x 64.1 cm)
The Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut. Purchased through the gift of James Junius Goodwin
What Will Become of Me. 1985, ongoing
Two framed texts, glass jars, shelf, hair, fingernails, and skin
Dimensions variable
Pretoria Aides Circulate a 'Communist' Tract

By ALAN OWEN

PRETORIA, June 10 - Aides to South African Prime Minister P. W. Botha are circulating a 'Communist' pamphlet among Afrikaner nationalists, a newspaper here reported today.

The pamphlet, which has been labeled a 'Communist' document, was distributed to a group of Afrikaner nationalists who met here yesterday to discuss their political future. The group, which is known as the 'Communist Party', has been advised by the government to avoid public meetings and to concentrate on political action.

The pamphlet is a collection of articles written by Afrikaner nationalists who are opposed to the government's policies. It is said to be a 'Communist' document because it contains anti-government statements and supports the 'Communist' cause.

Aides to the prime minister have denied that the pamphlet was circulated by their office. However, the government has issued a statement saying that it is not responsible for the distribution of the pamphlet.

The government has been under pressure to take action against the distribution of 'Communist' literature, which has been blamed for the recent rise in violent attacks on government officials.

The Afrikaner nationalists who received the pamphlet said that they had not been informed of its contents and that they were not aware of its 'Communist' nature. They said that they had been told that it was a political document and that it contained information about the government's policies.

The government has said that it is not responsible for the distribution of the pamphlet and that it is not a 'Communist' document. However, the government has been under pressure to take action against the distribution of 'Communist' literature, which has been blamed for the recent rise in violent attacks on government officials.

The government has also said that it is not responsible for the distribution of the pamphlet and that it is not a 'Communist' document. However, the government has been under pressure to take action against the distribution of 'Communist' literature, which has been blamed for the recent rise in violent attacks on government officials.
## American's Caribbean

### $299-$369
Hotel & air fare included.
Free Budget rental car for 24 hours.

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION UPHELD
BY HIGH COURT AS A REMEDY
FOR PAST JOB DISCRIMINATION

SIX VOTE FOR IDEA
They Say Individuals Who
Suffered No Bias May
Sometimes Benefit

Rebuff to Administration
Decision May Quell Efforts to Strip Down
Presidential Order for Federal Contractors

WASHINGTON, July 1 - The Supreme Court today unanimously upheld an affirmative action program that had been established by the
National Aeronautics and Space Administration to correct past employment discrimination.

The court was asked to strike down the program, which is a
remedial measure for past discrimination. The program has been enforced by
the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which issued a finding last
year that the program was appropriate and did not violate equal protection
principles.

A majority of the court, however, ruled that the program failed to meet the
standards set by the court in the case of Regents of University of California v.\nBakke, a 1978 decision that required
affirmative action programs to be narrowly tailored to achieve a compelling
interest.

In the case of the case of Regents of University of California v.\nBakke, the court said that
affirmative action programs must not take advantage of minority status to
achieve a

The court said that
affirmative action programs must not take advantage of minority status to
achieve a

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affirmative action programs must not take advantage of minority status to
achieve a

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achieve a
Vanilla Nightmares #12. 1986
Charcoal on newspaper
23 ½ x 13 ½ in. (59.7 x 34.3 cm)
Vanilla Nightmares #18, 1987
Charcoal on newspaper
22 3/4 x 13 1/4 in. (56.4 x 34.8 cm)
Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts.
Gift of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York; Hassam, Speicher, Betts and Symons Funds
No Quarter
South Africa's Willful Blinders: A Region's Weakness

Reagan Resists Sanctions, but...

President Reagan, urged by his Foreign Policy Advisers and congressional allies, is resisting pressure from the United States to impose sanctions on South Africa. This stand is contrary to the advice of his own Foreign Relations Committee, which has urged him to consider a more punitive approach to South Africa's human rights abuses.

"I am quite angry. I think the West, for my part, can go to hell." -Bishop Desmond M. Tutu, the Nobel Peace Prize winner and Anglican bishop of Cape Town, warning of the President's stand.

"I'm amazed Bishop Tutu was not restrained as he was. People are being mugged and shot, imprisoned, killed, murdered." -Rev. Joseph E. Bilson, pastor of Delano.

Confusing Signals About the Economy
Of Tea Leaves and Interest Rates

"If Congress imposes sanctions, it would destroy America's flexibility, discard our diplomatic leverage and deepen the crisis." -President Reagan in the World Affairs Council survey.

"The President is right. People are being mugged and shot, imprisoned, killed, murdered." -Rev. Joseph E. Bilson, pastor of Delano.

Access to Wealth, Power, and Rates

Vanilla Nightmares #20 5/89 © Paper
Dear Friend,

I am black.
I am sure you did not realize this when you made/laughed at/agreed with that racist remark. In the past, I have attempted to alert white people to my racial identity in advance. Unfortunately, this invariably causes them to react to me as pushy, manipulative, or socially inappropriate. Therefore, my policy is to assume that white people do not make these remarks, even when they believe there are no black people present, and to distribute this card when they do.

I regret any discomfort my presence is causing you, just as I am sure you regret the discomfort your racism is causing me.

Dear Friend,

I am not here to pick anyone up, or to be picked up. I am here alone because I want to be here, ALONE.

This card is not intended as part of an extended flirtation.

Thank you for respecting my privacy.

DO NOT TOUCH, TAP, PAT, STROKE, PROD, PINCH, POKE, GROPE OR GRAB ME.

My Calling (Card) #1 (Reactive Guerrilla Performance for Dinners and Cocktail Parties). 1986-90
Performance prop. Printed card
1¼ x 3½ in. (5 x 9 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York

My Calling (Card) #2 (Reactive Guerrilla Performance for Bars and Discos). 1986-90
Performance prop. Printed card
1¼ x 3½ in. (5 x 9 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York

My Calling (Card) #3 (Reactive Guerrilla Performance for Disputed Territorial Skirmishes). 2012
Performance prop. Printed card
1¼ x 3½ in. (5 x 9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Merge. 1988

Video of Times Square LED billboard. Video (color, silent), 00:00:56, endless loop

Installation view of billboard in Messages to the Public, organized by Public Art Fund, New York. Shown every twenty minutes, May 1-May 31, 1989

Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Cornered. 1988
Video installation. Video (color, sound), approx. 00:17:00, with monitor, birth certificates, table, and chairs
Dimensions variable
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Bernice and Kenneth Newberger Fund
The Big Four Oh. 1988
Video installation. Video (color, sound), 00:47:32, with monitor, ring binder with two pages of handwritten text, and 153 blank sheets, forty baseballs, disassembled plastic coat of armor in fourteen pieces, and five bottles each containing blood, sweat, tears, piss, or vinegar
Dimensions variable
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund
Free #2. 1989
Screenprinted text on two black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core
48 × 31 in. (121.9 × 78.7 cm) and 38 × 53 in. (96.5 × 134.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Ur-Mutter #2: We Made You. 1989
Screenprinted text on black-and-white photograph, mounted on foam core
40 x 23 in. (101.6 x 58.4 cm)
Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, Massachusetts. Purchase with the Eleanor H. Bunce (Class of 1926) Art Acquisition Fund
Ur-Mutter #8. 1989
Screenprinted text on two black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core
Overall 36 x 59 1/2 in. (91.4 x 151.1 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Pretend #1, 1990
Screenprinted text on eight black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core
Six prints each 12 x 8 in. (30.4 x 20.3 cm) and two prints each 12 x 12 in. (30.4 x 30.4 cm)
The New School Art Collection, New York.
Pretend #2, 1990
Screenprinted text on three black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core
44 x 22 in. (111.7 x 55.8 cm); 44 x 35 in. (111.7 x 88.9 cm); and 44 x 31 in. (111.7 x 78.7 cm)
Brooklyn Museum, New York. Purchased with funds given by the Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Fund
what you know
Safe #1-4, 1990
Mixed-medium installation. Screenprinted text on four black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core and affixed to the corners of a room, with audio
30 7/8 x 42 in (76.8 x 106.7 cm); 24 5/8 x 39 7/8 in. (62.5 x 99.7 cm); 30 7/8 x 24 7/8 in. (77.3 x 63.3 cm); and 44 7/8 x 39 in. (112.6 x 99.1 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: photographs
We are within you.

You are safe.
What It's Like, What It Is #3. 1991
Video installation. Video (color, sound), constructed wood environment, four monitors, mirrors, and lighting
Dimensions variable
Installation views in Adrian Piper: desde 1965, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, October 17, 2003-January 18, 2004
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired in part through the generosity of Lonti Ebers, Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis, Candace King Weir, and Lévy Gorvy Gallery, and with support from The Modern Women's Fund
Decide Who You Are #1: Skinned Alive, 1992
Screenprinted images and text on three sheets of paper, mounted on foam core
72 × 42 in. (182.8 × 106.7 cm); 72 × 63 in. (182.8 × 160 cm); and 72 × 42 in. (182.8 × 106.7 cm)
Collection Margaret and Daniel S. Loeb
YOU’R HIS’ HIStory,
a discontinued discount, that's the shelf where they'd find you, ripped out of your natural habitat, dropped onto an alien planet, broken into useful pieces. Forced to submit, beaten, raped, bred, traded.
Your will clipped into isolated acts of rebellion, committed by strangely familiar body parts, visiting from distant regions.
Forced to forget, your memory airbrushed into disbelief in the real by the reality of this reprogramming.
Forced to submit: beaten, raped, bred, traded, your will cloned into isolated acts of rebellion, committed by strangely familiar body parts, visiting from distant regions.
Forced to forget, your memory already shocked into disbelief in the real by the reality of this reprogramming.
Forced to relearn, to repeat, to mimic, to copy, to feign, your second language now your only one, one that lacks the words to translate what's been lost, sharpened by the urgent demands of present subservience.
Forced to be still: muted, gagged, silenced, stifled, your voice forced into secret channels of inhuman intuition, inventive wisdom germinating in solitary, hidden even from your kind's eye for safety's sake.
Forced to conflate, to adapt, to advance, to create, to surpass, your moves in the game styled by unforeseen discontinuities, by impulsive reversals, by sudden change in the rules: coherence, merit, quality, achievement not the point at all. Watch them cut you down or up, the crowning success of their club. Watch them score a few goals, arms outstretched, no longer the answer; what you are, where you're from, who you know, how you look; watching you out (not down or up), the crowning success of their club.
Watch them score a few goals, arms outstretched, no longer the answer; what you are, where you're from, who you know, how you look; shut your eyes, shut your ears, shut your mouth, shut yourself out of the game. Watch them gloat, mock, mock, mock, gloat, blocked, blocked, blocked, grafted, grafted, grafted, grafted, your skills of survival now sharpened and altered, captured, condensed and bottled, now almost ready for mass production, the ad campaign under way.

Decide Who You Are #6: Your History. 1992
Screenprinted images and text on seven sheets of paper, mounted on foam core
72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm); 9 1/4 x 7 in. (24.8 x 17.8 cm); 24 x 7 1/4 in. (61 x 18.4 cm); 24 x 29 in. (61 x 73.7 cm); 22 x 32 in. (55.9 x 81.3 cm); 20 x 24 3/4 in. (50.8 x 62.9 cm) and 72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm)
Mott-Warsh Collection, Flint, Michigan
It's fine. I don't know what you mean. I didn't notice anything wrong. It seems fine to me.

You don't know anything, either? I don't see any problem. You see something? I see nothing. I just don't see it that way. It's MY way. I just don't see it that way. It's MY way, always. I'm not sure. I don't understand what you're talking about. I don't see anything.

Because I don't understand what you're talking about. I don't understand what you're talking about. I don't understand what you're talking about. I don't understand what you're talking about. I don't understand what you're talking about. I don't understand what you're talking about. I don't understand what you're talking about.
Decide Who You Are #15: You Don’t Want Me Here. 1992

Screenprinted images and text on three sheets of paper, mounted on foam core

72 × 42 in. (182.8 × 106.7 cm); 61 ¾ × 36 in. (156.9 × 91.4 cm); and 72 × 42 in. (182.8 × 106.7 cm)

Collection Marilyn and Larry Fields
IT'S PINK. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DIDN'T NOTICE ANYTHING WRONG. IT LOOKS PINK TO ME.

I DON'T BACK DOWN. NO, I DON'T. I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY. I DON'T BELIEVE ANYTHING. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY. I DON'T JUST BACK DOWN.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY. I DON'T BELIEVE ANYTHING. I DON'T JUST BACK DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT AS IT IS. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ANGRY. I'M NOT BACKING DOWN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I DONT CARE WHAT YOU SAY.
In the places where my wings should be
there are only small, little knobs that ache constantly,
marking drift on a draft of possibility.

An intrusive thought of my person
brings me hurtling down,
plunging me onto my back,
positioning me to be turned easily around.

Nevertheless I know they're there.
Sometimes they run my face in sleep
or shade as in confinements
or lift me away from local war.

For moments at a time.

It's their futile, frantic flapping in the void
that makes them hurt so much,
not enough air to support them,
too much of it stinks.

The scent of dusty smell of too many dead fathers decomposed
resisting inhalation.
It's time.

I don't know what you mean.
I didn't notice anything wrong.

Somebody is wrong.

Don't forget, I'm not going to change my mind.

I don't understand what you mean.

I'm not going to change my mind.
Black Box/White Box. 1992
Video installation. Video (color, sound), 00:30:00, with two constructed wood environments, monitor, four photographs, light box, audio, chairs, tables, tissue boxes, and trash baskets
Dimensions variable
Installation view in Adrian Piper: seit 1965, Generali Foundation, Vienna, May 17-August 18, 2002
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Details: black box and white box interiors
Ashes to Ashes

There was a marriage of passion rather than convenience. He was her first date, and first and only husband. They both started smoking in their teens. "Everyone did it," they said later. "It was about being young and independent, and daring." They threw parties, went dancing, were invited out, and accepted tributes to their beauty from their friends. She stopped smoking in her fifties, after watching her boss, a debonair three-packs-a-day man, die horribly from brain cancer. But she became more and more tired and breathless, more and more quickly. Finally she was diagnosed with emphysema. Her doctor warned him that he had to stop smoking too, or the smoke would kill her. He tried to stop. He couldn't. It hurt his pride. He said he could if he wanted to, but he didn't want to. And besides, he said, it wasn't the smoke that was damaging her lungs, it was the smog from the city. Whenever he lit a cigarette, she would leave the room. He smoked almost constantly, so she learned to live in distant rooms. She thought he loved his cigarettes more than he cared about her. He kept trying to stop. He tried candy, cinnamon sticks, toothpicks, cold turkey. Nothing worked. He couldn't control it. He felt ashamed. He grew withdrawn. She felt unloved, neglected, alone. She grew resigned. Then he had a stroke and fell down in the street. He was scared enough by that to stop for four months. After he started up again, he never again would discuss his smoking and never again tried to stop. But she had seen that he couldn't stop; that he'd tried and tried, but couldn't, not to save her life, not to save their marriage, not even to save himself. And so she forgave him. By that time she was so short of breath that she could no longer walk up the hill to the supermarket to buy groceries. So she let him do that, and post the mail, and run her errands. He was grateful that she let him do it and she was glad he wanted to do it. Once again he was her hero. They were happy. When the cancer first began to stipple his face and throat he refused to notice it. Only after their daughter began to carry out her threat to hound him and nag him and dog his footsteps until he agreed to see a doctor did he finally relent. The cancer quickly ate away his pharynx, throat and mouth. He got smaller and thinner and sadder and quieter as the huge, raging growths on his neck got bigger and redder. After he died she said, "You cannot imagine how it feels to watch someone you have physically loved waste away in pain to nothing." Her grief was inconsolable. Because her breath was so short - she said it felt as though she'd taken a very deep breath in but couldn't exhale - there was very little she could do. But because she refused to give up, everything had to be arranged: one friend to bring her mail upstairs from the mailbox, another to take it down; the newspaper to be delivered, not to the impossibly distant front door downstairs, but to her apartment; a reliable neighbor's son to deliver her groceries; a friend to bring her snacks; another to run her errands and feed the cat; a cleaning lady to keep the dust and grime at bay; her daughter to manage the bills, and, later, her wellbeing. After awhile there was too much to arrange and she was too exhausted to do any of it, or withstand the incursions of those who were trained to help. She wanted to go, prayed for it to be over. Near the very end, when she had no breath left even to move or speak, she would look at his picture lovingly, and smile with anticipation.
The Color Wheel Series. 2000
Digital file for print reproduction
Dimensions variable
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: The Color Wheel Series, First Adhyasa: Annomayakosha #33
Detail: The Color Wheel Series, First Adhyasa: Annomayakosha #29
You/Stop/Watch: A Shiva Japan. 2002
Documentation of the performance. Video (color, sound), 00:42:26
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: video still at 00:29:04
Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago. 2004
Documentation of the participatory performance-lecture. Video (color, sound), 01:43:18
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: video still at 00:51:54
Everything #2.3. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8½ × 11 in. (21.6 × 27.9 cm)
Private collection
Everything will be taken away
Everything will be taken away
Everything will be taken away

Everything #2.5, 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
11 × 8 1/2 in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Private collection
Everything #2.7, 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8½ x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Private collection
Everything will be taken away
Ev e

Everything #2.9.2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
11 × 8½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
Private collection. Courtesy Flow Advisory
Everything will be taken away

Everything #2.10. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Rothier Faria Collection
Everything will be taken away

Everything #2.12a. 2003
Photograph photocopied on paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8½ × 11 in. (21.6 × 27.9 cm)
Collection J-E Van Praet
Everything will be taken away

*Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8½ × 11 in. (21.6 × 27.9 cm)
Collection Lonti Ebers, New York*
Everything will be taken away
Everything #2.15, 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8½ x 11 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Lonti Elbers, New York
Everything #3, 2003
Sandwich-board performance
Performance view in Sandwiched, organized and performed by Jacob Fabricius,
with Public Art Fund and The Wrong Gallery, New York, September 24, 2003
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Everything #4. 2004
Engraved mirror, gold leaf, and wood frame
Edition: 2 of 8
13 × 10 in. (33 × 25.4 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Everything #5.1, 2004
Engraved Plexiglas and gold leaf, inserted into wall
48 x 24 in. (121.9 x 61 cm)
Installation view in The Wall in Our Heads: American Artists and the Berlin Wall,
Goethe Institute, Washington, D.C., October 25–December 15, 2014
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Everything #10. 2007
Participatory group performance
Performance view in Six Actions for New York City, commissioned and organized by Creative Time, New York, May 2007, with participant Gavin Kroeber
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Everything will be taken away

- Gain
- Liberation
- Enslavement
- Loss
- Enslavement
- Liberation
More charges filed in black woman's torture case. The Associated Press Tuesday, September 18, 2007. The graphic details of a black woman's alleged torture were revealed for the first time in court Tuesday as more charges were filed against two of six white people accused in the case. Carmen Williams, the woman's mother, left the hearing in tears after listening to the allegations. Police say 20-year-old Megan Williams was tortured, sexually assaulted, forced to eat animal feces and taunted with a racial slur. Police said the woman, who owned the trailer where the alleged assault took place told them the six were afraid to let Williams go because she might tell on them. They also alleged about killing her. Magistrate Jeffrey Lane referred the case against Frankie Brewster, 49, to a grand jury for action. In addition to charges of kidnapping, sexual assault and giving false information to police, the prosecutor filed three counts of misdemeanor battery against Brewster and dropped a charge of unlawful wounding Danny J. Combs, 30, now faces a kidnapping charge that carries life in prison. He originally was charged with sexual assault and malicious wounding. Prosecutors added two more sexual assault charges. The six people charged are accused of assaulting Williams for more than a week in a trailer. The assault ended when an anonymous tip led police to the home Sept. 9. The Associated Press generally does not identify suspected victims of sexual assault, but Williams and her mother agreed to release her name. Carmen Williams said she wanted people to know what her daughter had endured. Reading from a statement Megan Williams gave deputies that day, Sheriff's Deputy Jeffrey Robbette said Williams was stabbed with what she described as a butcher knife and beaten with wooden sticks and fly swatters. He said the woman was sexually assaulted, doused with hot water and taunted with racial slurs. Two of her captors forced her to drink a cup of their urine, Sheriff's Deputy Rick Goodman testified. Deputies are still trying to determine how long Williams was held. In a statement to deputies, Brewster detailed her role and implicated others, saying "I just want to come clean." Brewster also is accused of forcing Williams to perform oral sex on her. Hearings for some of the other defendants were scheduled for Tuesday afternoon.
Everything #19.2. 2007
Video (black and white, silent), 00:04:45
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: video still at 00:00:14
The Spurious Life-Death Distinction (Part II of The Pac-Man Trilogy). 2006
Unite (Part I of The Pac-Man Trilogy). 2005
Two animated videos (color, silent), 00:45:00 and 00:09:22
Installation view in Adrian Piper: Everything, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, March 1–April 19, 2008
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Bait-and-Switch (Part III of The Pac-Man Trilogy). 2008
Animated video (color, silent), 00:04:48
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: video still at 00:00:44
Everything #21. 2010-13
Chalk on four vintage blackboards in lacquered wood frames, each covered with the handwritten sentence
"Everything will be taken away" and mounted on the wall at eye-level
Each 47\(\frac{3}{4}\) in. x 8 ft. 2\(\frac{3}{4}\) in. (120 x 250 cm)
Rennie Collection, Vancouver
Details: two of four
WEEKLY EXPENSE REPORT

(ATTACH RECEIPTS IF POSSIBLE)

TO _________________________ FROM _________________________

FOR WEEK ENDING _________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOTEL</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOTEL</td>
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<tr>
<td>BREAKFAST</td>
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<td>LUNCH</td>
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<td>DINNER</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLANE, RAIL</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUS FARE</td>
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<td>LOCAL TAXIS</td>
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<td>STREET CAB</td>
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<td>RUB BARE</td>
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<td>AUTO EXPENSES</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAS AND OIL</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUBRICATION AND WASH</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>GARAGE PARKING</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHONE</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>TELEGRAMS</td>
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<td>TIPS</td>
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<td>ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>20</td>
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</table>

MILEAGE RECORD

END OF TRIP

LESS - START

MILES PER TRIP

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE EXPENDITURES REPRESENT CASH SPENT FOR LEGITIMATE COMPANY BUSINESS ONLY AND INCLUDES NO ITEMS OF A PERSONAL NATURE.

SIGNED _________________________

DATE REPAYMENT Recap AMOUNT APPROVAL CASHIERS MEMO

ADVANCE RECEIVED

REIMBURSED TOTAL

EXPENSE FOR WEEK

OVER OR SHORT

TOPS FORM 1241 LITHO IN U.S.A.

Vanishing Point #2, 2009
Pencil and ballpoint pen on expense report sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 ½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Annette Gentz and Pascal Decker Collection
### WEEKLY EXPENSE REPORT

(ATTACH RECEIPTS IF POSSIBLE)

**TO:**

**FROM:**

**FOR WEEK ENDING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUN.</th>
<th>MON.</th>
<th>TUES.</th>
<th>WED.</th>
<th>THUR.</th>
<th>FRI.</th>
<th>SAT.</th>
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<td>Manhattan</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>Berlus</td>
<td>Lindenhof</td>
<td>Lambrecht</td>
<td>Ann Arbor</td>
<td>Monroe Park</td>
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#### Hotel
1. MOTEL

#### Breakfast
2. BREAKFAST

#### Lunch
3. LUNCH

#### Plane / Rail
4. PLANE / RAIL

#### Local Taxis
5. LOCAL TAXIS

#### Bus Fare
6. BUS FARE

#### Auto Expense
7. AUTO EXPENSE

#### Gas and Oil
8. GAS AND OIL

#### Lubrication and Wash
9. LUBRICATION AND WASH

#### Garage Parking
10. GARAGE PARKING

#### Phone
11. PHONE

#### Telegrams
12. TELEGRAMS

#### Entertainment
13. ENTERTAINMENT

#### TOTALS
14. TOTALS

#### Mileage Record

**END OF TRIP**

**MILES PER TRIP**

**REMARKS:** Vanishing Point #6.1 (2009)

---

Ballpoint pen, crayon, and pencil on weekly expense-report form sanded with sandpaper

11 x 8 ½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)

Collection Adrian Piper Research Foundation Berlin
WEEKLY EXPENSE REPORT
(ATTACH RECEIPTS IF POSSIBLE)

TO: Vanishing Point #6.2
FROM: 2009

FOR WEEK ENDING:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>HOTEL/MOTEL</th>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
<th>TOTAL FOR WEEK</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 2 BREAKFAST  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 3 LUNCH      |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 4 PLANE-RAIL BUS FARE |   |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 5 LOCAL TAXIS STREET CAR BUS FARE | |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 6 AUTO EXPENSE REPAIR-TIRES SUPPLIES | |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 7 GAS AND OIL |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 8 LUBRICATION AND WASH |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 9 GARAGE PARKING |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 10 FUEL |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 11 TELEGRAMS |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 12 TIPS |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 13 ENTERTAINMENT |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 14                                 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 15                                 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |
| 16                                 |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |                |

END OF TRIP

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE EXPENDITURES INCLUDES NO ITEMS OF A PERSONAL NATURE.

SIGNED: Vanishing Point #6.2

DATE REPAYMENT Recap AMOUNT APPROVAL CASHIER'S MEMO
ADVANCE RECEIVED TOTAL CHECK NO.
EXPENSE FOR WEEK DATE AMOUNT
OVER OR SHORT

Vanishing Point #6.2, 2009
Ballpoint pen, crayon, and pencil on weekly expense-report form sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
### INVENTORY

**Vanishing Point #8**

<table>
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<th>ITEM NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vanishing Point - 4.11.2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Department:** Drawing

**Location:** 4. December 2011

**Priced by:** [Name]

**Extended by:** [Name]

**Called by:** [Name]

**Examined by:** [Name]

**Entered by:** [Name]

**Extended by:** [Name]

**Called by:** [Name]

**Examined by:** [Name]

**Entered by:** [Name]

---

**Vanishing Point**: Endorshed love phrase! Some who care. First of all, in terms of self-activated desire. I live in the word and beyond. Of course, I know when there is no longer any power to move things. Having moved among others who face a future that they cannot control anymore, we wish to satisfy an in.

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Adrian Moves to Berlin. 2007
Documentation of the street performance. Video (color, sound), 01:02:42
Video by Robert Del Principe
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Detail: video still at 00:38:09
IN ORDER TO ENTER THE ROOM, YOU MUST HUM A TUNE. ANY TUNE WILL DO.

BEGIN HUMMING AS YOU APPROACH THE GUARD.

The Humming Room
13.10.2012

Exhibition instruction. Pencil on graph paper with digital additions
8½ × 11 in. (21.6 × 27.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
Dear Friends,

For my 64th birthday, I have decided to change my racial and nationality designations. Henceforth, my new racial designation will be neither black nor white but rather 6.25% grey, honoring my 1/16th African heritage. And my new nationality designation will be not African American but rather Anglo-German American, reflecting my preponderantly English and German ancestry. Please join me in celebrating this exciting new adventure in pointless administrative precision and futile institutional control!

20 September 2013

Karin M.E.S. Piper
Imagine [Trayvon Martin], 2013
Photolithograph
10 3/8 x 10 3/8 in. (26.5 x 27.3 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Imagine what it was like to be me
Installation and participatory group performance. Embossed gold vinyl text on three walls with 70% gray paint, three circular gold reception desks with stools, computer system, contracts, registry of contact data for signatories, three administrators, and self-selected members of the public. Each desk 6 ft. 1/2 in. (183 cm) diam., x 53 in (160 cm) high; installation dimensions variable
Hamburger Bahnhof-Museum für Gegenwart, Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin
Howdy #6 [Second Series]. 2015
Ceiling-mounted light projection, closed and locked door, and darkened hallway
Projection 36 x 36 in. (91.4 x 91.4 cm)
Installation view in The Present in Drag, 9th Berlin Biennale, June 4–September 18, 2016
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
1. After examining the 1860 Census for Xenia, Greene County, Ohio, we can see that Philip Piper died November 1, 1879, when he was seventy-four years old. He was a former slave owner. What is interesting about his death record is that he is listed as "colored." 

2. Philip Piper was a white, former slave owner. The reason for this discrepancy is that his children, previously his slaves, are inheriting his entire estate. This was quite an unusual occurrence.

3. In examining the Piper family tree, one learns that Silas is the son of Silas and Philip Piper. After reviewing the 1850 Census record, we gather that Silas and Ella had advanced employment opportunities. Silas was employed as a grocer and Ella was a school teacher. Both Silas and Ella were in their early twenties. Perhaps Silas owned a grocery store, and Ella most likely taught in the African American children and helped provide them with advanced opportunities.

4. Answers will vary.

5. All children were born in Ohio. Silas and Ella were born in Ohio. Their parents were also born in Ohio. All of their relatives were born in Ohio. The only exceptions are the parents of Silas and Ella, who were born in Pennsylvania. However, all of their children were born in Ohio.
PERSONAL
CHRONOLOGY

ADRIAN PIPER
Adrian Margaret Smith Piper born September 20 in Washington Heights, only child of Daniel Robert Piper and Olive Xavier Smith Piper.

Maternal grandmother Margaret Ann Norris Smith, a former high school teacher, who lives with family, teaches Piper to draw.

Piper enters Riverside Church Nursery and Sunday School. Hears Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s Scheherazade.

Piper writes and illustrates own stories. Spends summer at Camp Good News, on Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

Piper enters first grade at New Lincoln School, in Manhattan, on a scholarship. Spends summer (and every summer thereafter through 1962) at Camp Bass Lake Farm, in Altmar, New York. Learns to swim. Takes violin lessons.

Piper sees first film: The Court Jester, with Danny Kaye.


Piper takes art classes at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) after school. Reads Lewis Carroll, becomes Alice in Wonderland (through 1979). Listens to Igor Stravinsky’s Les Noces. Fourth-grade teacher Mrs. Catherine Moore brings Piper up to speed in math.

Piper’s fifth-grade teacher, Miss Modiano, asks parents if Piper is aware that she is colored. Piper gets sick a lot. Listens to The FBI in Peace and War, Suspense, Amos ’n’ Andy, Burns and Allen, The Shadow, Our Gal Sunday, Ma Perkins, One Man’s Family, Helen Trent on radio. Sees The Horror of Dracula and wears garlic around neck for rest of summer. Gets pleurisy. Gives away superb comic book collection. Takes riding lessons at Van Cortlandt Park.

Piper receives art lessons from paternal grandmother Beatrix Downs Piper McCleary, a former grammar school teacher. Discovers Booth Tarkington, Laura Ingalls Wilder. Piper sells her complete Nancy Drew series for a pittance. Gets The Diary of Anne Frank from parents for birthday. Gets a journal from parents for Christmas.
1960

Piper begins journals with the new year.

1961


1962

Piper joins local high school Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Family moves from Washington Heights to Riverside Drive, leaving bachelor maternal uncle Martin Smith, who also lived with family, in Washington Heights apartment, where he becomes a recluse. Maternal grandmother Margaret Ann Norris Smith dies. Piper joins Puerto Rican gang. Teaches herself to play guitar. Bikes weekly to Greenwich Village for Sunday breakfast at Cafe Figaro. Participates in life-drawing groups at various locations in Manhattan. Listens to Johnny Pacheco, Charlie Palmieri, Celia Cruz. Sees Alain Resnais’s Last Year at Marienbad for the first of many hundreds of times, Greta Garbo’s complete oeuvre.

1963


1964

Hangs out at Steve Paul’s The Scene; encounters Edie Sedgwick. Piper reads Sigmund Freud, Edmund Wilson, Herman Melville. Works through Russian phase (Leo Tolstoy, Nikolai Gogol, Anton Chekhov, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, all in Constance Garnett translations), German phase (Hermann Hesse, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Böll, Bertolt Brecht, Robert Musil, Günter Grass), French phase (Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Honoré de Balzac, Émile Zola, Stendhal, Marcel Proust, Guy de Maupassant, André Gide, Théophile Gautier), Scandinavian phase (Par Lagerkvist, Knut Hamsun, August Strindberg, Sigrid Undset, Ingmar Bergman, Victor Sjöström). Multiple viewings of Bergman trilogy (Through a Glass Darkly, Winter Light, The Silence).

1965

Piper reads Beat writers (Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, William S. Burroughs), discovers yoga, does psychedelic drawings and paintings, writes poetry. Reads Ginsberg’s “Howl,” takes LSD, leaves home, works as a discotheque dancer at Ginza and Entre Nous nightclubs, is picked up by police and sent to juvenile court, pleads guilty to being a wayward minor, is sent to Bellevue for observation. Resumes artwork, finishes high school course work, meets Phillip Zohn, resumes painting classes at the Art Students League. Reads the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita. Sees Fritz Lang’s Metropolis. Discovers Busby Berkeley.

1966


1968


1969


1970


1971


1972


1973

1974


1975


1976

Piper completes course work at Harvard. Works as teaching assistant for John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin. Reads Richard Brautigan.

1977

Piper awarded Harvard Sheldon Traveling Fellowship to spend academic year in Berlin and Heidelberg working on Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Passport and belongings stolen in the Musée d'Art moderne while constructing Art for the Artworld Surface Pattern for the Paris Biennale. In Heidelberg, participates in student resistance to Altstadt Studentenheim Sanierung; studies and writes all day, drinks beer all evening, goes dancing most of the night. Reads Peter Handke, Karl Philipp Moritz. Rediscovers 1960s and '70s rock, also Nina Hagen, Ian Dury.

1978


1979

Piper flies from Cambridge to Paris for four days to see Paris-Moscow, 1900-1930 at Centre Pompidou. Awarded her first full Visual Artists’ Fellowship by National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Moves to Ann Arbor, Michigan, begins tenure-track assistant professorship in philosophy at the University of Michigan. Completes Three Political Self-Portraits.

1980

Piper premieres Four Intruders Plus Alarm Systems and It's Just Art in Art of Conscience: The Last Decade at Wright State University, Dayton. Listens to Patti Smith, The Police, Talking Heads.

1981


1982


1983

Piper premieres Funk Lessons at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Best friend Phillip Zohn dies of AIDS-related encephalitis. Piper begins design of poster Think About It, commemorating 1963 March on Washington. Reads Toni...

1984


1985

Piper’s father dies of cancer of the pharynx, shunned by his sister Beatrix Hamburg and her family during his illness and death. Piper swims daily; views every episode of Dynasty made up to that point. Denied tenure at the University of Michigan. Begins continuing self-collection piece What Will Become of Me. Premieres A Tale of Avarice and Poverty at New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.


1986


1987


1988


1989


1990

Piper publishes “Impartiality, Compassion, and Modal Imagination,” in Ethics. Exhibits What It’s Like, What It Is #1 at Washington Project for the Arts; What It’s Like, What It Is #2 at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; and What It’s Like, What It Is #3 at MoMA. Twenty-year retrospective travels in England and Germany. Art-world rehabilitation continues. Publishes “Passing for White, Passing for Black.” Collapses twice from physical exhaustion, ends spring semester on medical leave. Curtails speaking and writing commitments.
1992


1993

Piper exhibits Hypothesis series at Paula Cooper. Moves to Cape Cod to take care of mother during her terminal decline from emphysema, while continuing to teach at Wellesley and lecture on art and philosophy. Collapses from physical exhaustion at end of spring and fall semesters. Further curtails speaking engagements.

1994

Piper collapses from physical exhaustion at end of spring and fall semesters. Mother dies from emphysema.

1995


1996


1997


1998


1999


2000


2001

2002


2003

Piper notifies Wellesley of receipt of Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften (IFK) Fellowship. The College cancels spring semester metaethics course seventeen days before registration. Piper is forced to decline IFK invitation on medical grounds due to The College's refusal to pay benefits during fellowship period; Piper amends MCAD lawsuit to include additional charges. Finishes third volume of *Rationality and the Structure of the Self*. Condenses three volumes into two and spins off fourth volume into separate project, *Kant's Metaethics*. Delivers Funk Lessons *Lessons at Art Institute of Chicago*; "Now What? Passing beyond Passing" at University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign; "Talking Pictures" at Museu d'Art Contemporani Barcelona (MACBA); and "Vergangenheitsverarbeitung and the Pursuit of Happiness: Regarding the Other in Germany and the U.S." at Einstein-Forum, Berlin. Retrospective *Adrian Piper since 1965* opens at MACBA. Piper preemptively withdraws "Vedanta Ethics and Epistemology" course, creates and publicizes midlevel "Philosophy of Yoga" course for Wellesley's spring 2004 semester.

2004

Piper teaches "Philosophy of Yoga" course. Blocks Philosophy Department's second attempt to cancel annual Kant seminar. Finishes *The Color Wheel Series* with video, *Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago*. Dean of The College discontinues medical disability accommodations against doctors' warnings, effective spring 2005. House vandalized. Piper begins purchase of apartment building in Berlin-Mitte. Philosophy Department accidentally drops description of new Rawls and Jürgen Habermas course, repeatedly, from 2005 course catalogue. Piper's second liver biopsy reveals persisting cryptogenic portal stage 2 fibrosis. Piper discovers Bhangra hip-hop. Shunned by Philosophy Department junior colleague; department and Committee on Faculty Appointments decline to reprimand her. Piper teaches "Kant's Metaethics" seminar. Summarily relieved of committee responsibilities and involvement in promotion and hiring decisions by Philosophy Department. Develops chronic pleurisy. Again amends MCAD lawsuit to include additional charges. Attends London and Berlin premieres of *Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago* and gives talks: "Political Art and the Paradigm of Innovation," at Tate Modern and Humboldt University's art history department, and "Passing Beyond Passing," at Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin. At urging of European friends sees Lars von Trier's *Dogville*; gets it. Invited to accept Research Fellowship at Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin/Institute for Advanced Study for academic year 2005-06. Produces and gives talk on soundwork *Construct Madrid* at Residencia de Estudiantes, Madrid, for citywide 2005 exhibition *Itinerarios del sonido*. Attends second opening of group show Funky Lessons, BAWAG P.S.K. Contemporary Vienna.

2005

Piper ensures ability to continue teaching without disability accommodations by correctly forecasting and scheduling periodic physical collapses into spring 2005 syllabus, totaling a month of absence from classes (out of a three-month long semester). Nevertheless falls asleep at wheel on highway twice, has minor accident once, narrowly avoids major accident once. Repeatedly gets flat tires on return leg of Wellesley-Cape Cod commute. Refuses Dean of The College's pressure to forfeit fall 2006 paid sabbatical. The College rejects application for paid sabbatical for fall 2005–spring 2006, rejects appeal, rejects Wissenschaftskolleg's offer of junior faculty teaching compensation, attempts to force application for unpaid leave of absence. Piper refuses to apply for unpaid leave of absence. Files internal formal grievance against College President and Dean for multiple violations of Wellesley's bylaws and impairments of college's interests. President and Dean both refuse to respond. Grievance Committee fords speaking directly to its members, denies request for hearing, denies request to question President and Dean, denies request that President be recused as final court of appeal, denies request for additional time to submit evidence, dismisses grievance. AAUP again refuses to investigate. Scholars at Risk refuses to investigate. Philosophy colleague warns Piper not even to approach relevant APA committees. Piper again amends MCAD lawsuit to include additional charges. Piper regretfully declines invitation fellowship at Wissenschaftskolleg. Spends four-day retreat at Sarada Convent, in Hollywood Hills. College requests conflict
resolution. Piper proposes resolution. Sells house on Cape Cod. Sells car. Sells personal effects.

Piper moves to East Berlin apartment with Ginger and Kali. Piper becomes first (and, as of this date, only known) recipient of German residency permit under new Ausländerrecht (Foreigners law) Par. 71.3. aufenthG: Ausnahmefälle (Exceptional cases). Chronic pleurisy disappears. Ankylosing spondylitis symptoms disappear. Liver fibrosis disappears. The College rejects conflict-resolution proposal, refuses to propose alternative. Piper rejects Wellesley’s offer of “impartial” mediation in which both her lawyer and the mediator are paid by The College. Dean of The College cancels salary, health insurance, dental insurance, and pension contributions in second week of fall semester. Piper begins final revisions of *Rationality and the Structure of the Self.* Completes purchase of apartment building in Berlin-Mitte. Begins visiting professorship at Danish Royal Academy of Art’s School of Walls and Space.

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**2006**


**2007**


The College’s new president recommends termination of Piper’s tenured full professorship to board of trustees. Piper opens solo exhibition *Everything* at Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, in absentia. Scans close to one thousand family photos from family archive. Cambridge University Press formally accepts both *Rationality and the Structure of the Self,* vol. 1, *The Human Conception* and also *Rationality and the Structure of the Self,* vol. 2, *A Kantian Conception* for publication. Piper goes on several retreats at Vedanta-Gesellschaft, Binneweide. The College’s board of trustees terminates Piper’s tenured full professorship in philosophy. AAUP again refuses to investigate. Cambridge University Press reneges on written agreement to demand no further cuts to *Rationality and the Structure of the Self.* Piper refuses to sign contract and instead publishes both volumes gratis at APRA website. The North

2009

Piper successfully renews passport. Interview by Dawn Chan about Rationality and the Structure of the Self appears at Artforum website. Posts “Academic Rankings” on Philosophy in Europe e-List, deals with fallout. Delivers “Kant’s Transcendental Analysis of Action” at British Society for the History of Philosophy’s annual conference “Transcendental Philosophy: Its History and Nature” at Manchester Metropolitan University. Does follow-up interview with Lukkas for Telling Time Projects. Attends decision-theory and logic workshops at London School of Economics, HEC Lausanne, and University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Exhibits artwork at Elizabeth Dee, Emi Fontana, and Galerie Christian Nagel booths at Berlinier Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin. Chairs session at annual UKKS conference on Morality and Society, Lancaster University; attends Kant-Gesellschaft conference on Regulative Ideas in Frankfurt. Begins Vanishing Point drawing and installation series. Discovers Paolo Conte. Reads Alexis de Toqueville. Finishes Bait-and-Switch, exhibits complete Pac-Man Trilogy (2005-09) at Berlin Akademie der Künste ABC Art Contemporary and eleven Drawings about Paper, Writings about Words (1967) in Materialien exhibition at Münzsalon, Berlin. Rereads Hermann Hesse’s Magister Ludi (Das Glasperlenspiel). First and only critical notice of Second APRA Foundation Berlin Multi-Disciplinary Fellow. Yoga poses Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimottanasana (left side), Marichyasana D, Baddha Konasana, Baddha Padmasana, Urdhva Padmasana, Paschimottanasana, self-invented Herniasana are taken away by torn left medial meniscus, then gradually restored, on loan from Shiva. Develops peer-review web-publication application that reconciles antipiracyism policy with blind submission/double-blind review procedure, conceives and launches Berlin Journal of Philosophy, announces both on Philosophy in Europe e-list, and offers web-application to other philosophy journals. None accept it. Sued by disgruntled former director of APRA. Delivers “Kant’s Two Replies to Hobbes” to first plenary session of UKKS Annual Conference. Piper discovers that entire Archive staff has been working at APRA under false pretenses with fraudulent contracts, endangering its legal and financial standing; all resign. Advised that this form of work fraud is usual and protected under German law. Closes Archive. Title of Professor Emeritus conferred by American Philosophical Association. Posts “Contracts & Contempt” at website. Hearing in right ear taken away then gradually restored, on loan from Shiva.

2010


2011

Piper receives another e-mail message from The College, now requesting web access to “documented lawsuit” against The College and “Personal Report.” Delivers “Kant’s Self-Legislation Procedure Reconsidered” to King’s College London Philosophy Department. Announces first APRA Foundation Berlin Multi-Disciplinary Fellow. Yoga poses Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimottanasana (left side), Marichyasana D, Baddha Konasana, Baddha Padmasana, Urdhva Padmasana, self-invented Herniasana are taken away by torn left medial meniscus, then gradually restored, on loan from Shiva. Develops peer-review web-publication application that reconciles antipiracyism policy with blind submission/double-blind review procedure, conceives and launches Berlin Journal of Philosophy, announces both on Philosophy in Europe e-list, and offers web-application to other philosophy journals. None accept it. Sued by disgruntled former director of APRA. Delivers “Kant’s Two Replies to Hobbes” to first plenary session of UKKS Annual Conference. Piper discovers that entire Archive staff has been working at APRA under false pretenses with fraudulent contracts, endangering its legal and financial standing; all resign. Advised that this form of work fraud is usual and protected under German law. Closes Archive. Title of Professor Emeritus conferred by American Philosophical Association. Posts “Contracts & Contempt” at website. Hearing in right ear taken away then gradually restored, on loan from Shiva.

2012

Second APRA Foundation Berlin Multi-Disciplinary Fellow rejects funding and cancels awarded project. Piper reads Stellungnahme zu dem Beschluß des Landesgerichts Berlin aloud at second lawsuit hearing; judge agrees not to apply statutes protecting work fraud. Wins College Art Association 2012 Artist Award for a Distinguished Body of Work, for having “since the late 1960s . . . profoundly influenced the language and form of Conceptual art.” Establishes APRA Foundation Berlin Graduate Student Teaching Scholarship in Philosophy at Keele University. Resolves to stop doing Kapotasana, Mukta

2013


2014


2015


2016

Piper decides to forego participation in further philosophy conferences while working on MoMA retrospective. The Barbie Doll Drawings included in Drawing Then: Innovation and Influence in American Drawing of the Sixties at Dominique Lévy Gallery. Exhibits Howdy #6 (2015) and Everything #5.1 (2004) in 9th Berlin
Biennale; Funk Lessons in Manifesta 11; and My Calling (Card) #3: Guerrilla Performance for Disputed Territorial Skirmishes (2012) at Museum der Moderne Salzburg collections show. Completes manuscript Escape to Berlin: A Travel Memoir, begins publication-production process. Streamlines asana practice. Immediately injures back, gives up Supta Kurmasana. Multiple intimations of her mortality cause in Piper an obsessive-compulsive addiction to genealogical research on her family that threatens to engulf her life and work. Tries to make peace with it by creating Never Forget. Reads all the slave narratives she has been stockpiling in her library for decades. Discovers cat’s claw herbal tea, back pain disappears, gradually recovers Supta Kurmasana. Places The Probable Trust Registry with Nationalgalerie Berlin, begins work on its exhibition premiere at Hamburger Bahnhof in 2017. Creates President Bandersnatch (with thanks to Lewis Carroll and John Tenniel) for Grey Room magazine to commemorate election of Donald Trump to U.S. presidency. Learns of Bob Dylan’s refusal to attend award ceremony in Oslo to receive Nobel Prize in Literature, decides to make no further public appearances. Takes enforced holiday: IT system crashes, Piper loses computer and e-mail access for a month. Simultaneously Piper also crashes: gets really bad flu virus, incapacitated for a month plus rehab time. Reads history and sociology of American society, European history, ancient and medieval history while recovering from burnout. Finds and reads Great-Aunt Ruby’s wonderful Hunter College undergraduate textbook, The History of Medieval Europe by Lynn Thorndike. Learns Yoga Sutras III.25–IV.1 by heart.

Page 313 (left):
Olive Xavier Smith Piper, Adrian Margaret Smith Piper, and Daniel Robert Piper
at Adrian’s christening, 1949
Black-and-white photograph
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.3 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 313 (right):
Adrian Piper
Portrait Artist with Customers, 1956
Tempera and pencil on paper
18 x 24¼ in. (45.7 x 61.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 314:
Café Figaro, on the corner of Macdougal and Bleecker Streets, Greenwich Village,
New York, 1965

Page 315 (left):
Dancers onstage at Ginza nightclub, New York, April 1, 1966

Page 315 (right):
Adrian Piper in loft at East Twenty-sixth Street and Lexington Avenue, 1968
Color photograph
13¼ x 9 in. (33.7 x 22.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 316:
The exhibition Paris-Moscow, 1900–1930, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris,
May 31–November 5, 1979

Page 317:
Adrian Piper
Think About It, 1987
Mock-up for billboard design. Rephotographed newspaper images,
transparent foil, text, and watercolor
14 x 17 in. (35.6 x 43.2 cm)
Sara M. and Michelle Vance Waddell

Page 318:
Some Reflective Surfaces (1975), on the cover of Art in America, September 1990

Page 319:
Adrian Piper’s home on Cape Cod, 2000
Digital photograph
4 x 6 in. (10.2 x 15.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 321:
Adrian Piper touring West Bengal and Orissa, India, with students from the
Royal Danish Academy of Art, 2007
Digital photograph #136
13⅛ x 17¼ in. (33.9 x 45.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Page 324:
Adrian Piper receiving the Golden Lion award, Venice Biennale, with Okwui Enwezor
at right, 2015
SELECTED EXHIBITION HISTORY
COMPiled by TESSA FERREYROS

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1969
0 TO 9 Press, New York. Three Untitled Projects [for 0 to 9]; Some Areas in the New York Area (mail-art exhibition). March.

1971

1976
Gallery One, Montclair State College, New Jersey. Adrian Piper. February.

1980

1987

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1991
University of Rhode Island Art Gallery, Kingston. Why Guess. February–March.

1992

1993
New Langton Arts, San Francisco. Installations by Adrian Piper. September 15–October 16.

1994

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1997
Galleria Emi Fontana, Milan. Adrian Piper, October 30.

1998

1999
Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley College, Massachusetts. What Are You? Selected Works by Adrian Piper. March 11–August 16.

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2018

PERFORMANCES

1968

1969
Between West Thirteenth and Fourteenth Streets and Fifth and Sixth Avenues, New York. Three untitled performances, in Street Works II, April 18.

1970

1971

1972

Streets of Rochester, New York. Two untitled street works. April.

1973

Hester and Ludlow Streets, New York. Being Mythic on the Street. Staged for Other Than Art’s Sake, a film by Peter Kennedy, October.
Rhode Island School of Design, Providence. Untitled streetwork. October.

1975


1977


1978


1980

Allen Memorial Museum, Oberlin College, Ohio. It’s Just Art. April 23. Also performed at Contemporary Art Institute of Detroit, July; University Art Galleries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, October 13; The Western Front, Vancouver, February 24, 1981; And/Or, Seattle, February 25; 1981; Artists Space, New York, April 28, 1981; and Penn State University, University Park, May 1981.

1981


1982

Streets of Menlo Park, California. Wide Receiver. October.

1983


1985

Center for Music Experiment, University of California at San Diego, La Jolla. Funk Lessons (videotape), in What’s Cooking VI. February.

1986


1987

Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago. My Calling (Cards) #1 and #2: A Meta-Performance I. January 30.

1988

The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York. My Calling (Cards) #1 and #2: A Meta-Performance II. May.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1969


Seattle Art Museum. 55/087, September 5–October 5. Traveled to Vancouver Art Gallery, January 13–February 8, 1970 (as 955,000).

Städtisches Museum, Leverkusen, Germany. Concept Art, October.


1970


1971


1972

Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, New York. Art without Limits. April 7–May 7.


1973


San Jose State University Art Gallery, California. Word Works Too. April 14–May 16.


1977


1978


Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston. Eventworks.

1980


1981


1983


SELECTED EXHIBITION HISTORY

1984

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1994

Weiner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University, Columbus. Will/Power: New Works by Papa Colo, Jimmie Durham, David Hammons, Hachivi Edgar Heap of Birds, Adrian Piper, Aminah Brenda Lyn Robinson, September 26–December 27.

1995


1996


1997

Fine Arts Gallery, University of California, Irvine. The Theater of Black Refusal: Black Art and Mainstream Criticism. April 8–May 12. Traveled to Richard L. Nelson Gallery, University of California, Davis, November 7–December 1; University Art Gallery, University of...
California, Riverside, January 9, 1993–February 27, 1994; and Center for Art, Design and Visual Culture, University of Maryland, Baltimore, November 11–December 17, 1994.

Neue Galerie, Graz, Austria. Kontext Kunst. October 2–November 11.

Fine Arts Gallery, University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Identities of the Other. November 12, 1993–January 15, 1994. Traveled to Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York; Fine Arts Gallery, University of California, Irvine; Contemporary Art Museum, University of South Florida, Tampa; the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans; the Woodruff Art Center, Atlanta College of Art; and Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City.

1994


1995


1996


Le MAGASIN. Centre national d’art contemporain, Grenoble, France. Réalités et fictions. 25 ans de l’art contemporain. April 5–May 25.

Verein Shedhalle, Zurich. If I Ruled the World. July 4–August 17.


1997

Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela. Desde el cuerpo: Alejandro de lo femenino (From the Body: Allegories of the Feminine). January–March.


1998


1999


2001


2002


documenta 11, Kassel. June 8–August 15.


2003


2004


330 SELECTED EXHIBITION HISTORY


2005


Orchard, New York. Formal Use of Text in Modern and Contemporary Works.


2006


Generali Foundation, Vienna. CONCEPT HAS NEVER MEANT HORSE. September 15–December 17.


2007


Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Gender Battle. September 25–September 27.


2008


10th Triennial. WALK. Berlin. Scope. September 27.


Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. The Quick and the Dead. April 24–September 27.


Centre for Contemporary Art FUTURA, Prague. The Eventual. May 16–August 9.


Den Frie Centre of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen. Fri PORTO. September 19–October 18.

Julia Stoschek Foundation, Düsseldorf. 100 Years (version #1, Duesseldorf). October 10, 2009–July 29, 2010. Organized with P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and Performa. Traveled to P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York, November 1, 2009–May 3, 2010 (as 100 Years [version #2, ps1, nov 2009]); Garage Center of Contemporary Culture, Moscow, June 19–September 17, 2010 (as 100 Years of Performance [version #3, moscow, June 2010]); and Boston University Art Galleries, January 19–March 25, 2012 (as 100 Years [version #4 Boston, 2012]).

Fotogalerie Wien, Vienna. Performance im Bild und im Medialen Übertrag. 2010


Synagogue de Delme, France. Self as Disappearance. February 19–May 23.


Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. The Talent Show. April 10–August 15.


May 1, 2011. 


2011


2013


Debaufre, Brussels. February 1–May 1.


Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo. In These Great Times. February 21–April 14.

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid. Playgrounds, April 30–September 22.

8th Shenzen Sculpture Biennale, OCT Contemporary Art Terminal, China. We Have Never Participated. May 16–August 31.


La Panacée, Montpellier, France. Une lettre arrive toujours. July 15–November 16.


Institute for Curatorial Practice, Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts. Sometimes a Traveler: Women, Othered Bodies, and the Colonizing Gaze (online exhibition).

2015


56th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di

La Halle, Pont-en-Royans, France. *De l’un(e) à l’autre*. October 23–December 30.

**2016**


DUVE, Berlin. *“MIRRORS”*. March 3–April 16.


**2017**


Fall 1983): 7-17.


1984


"Letter to Thomas McEvilley." Artforum 22, no. 3 (October): 3-3.

1985


1987


1988


1989


1990


"Introduction to Epistemology." Real Life Magazine 20, pp. 18-19.


1991

"Adrian Piper." MoMA Members Quarterly, Fall, p. 8.


1992

"Art and Politics: A Pre-Election Symposium." Art in America 80, no. 10 (October): 41.


1993


1995


"Discussion with Marianne Brouwer, Martin Lucas and Adrian Piper." In Voorbij ethiek en esthetiek/Beyond Ethics and Aesthetics, edited by Ine Govers and Jeanne van Heeswijk, pp. 42-79. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij SUN.


1998


1999


2001

"Adrian Piper." In Occupying Space: Generali Foundation Collection, pp. 427-64. Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König.

2004


2005


2006


"Notes on Funk, I-11." 1983-85. Reprinted in Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art,

1993


1994


1995


1996


1998

1999


2001

2002


2003


2004


2005


2006

Franks, Pamela. "Conceptual Rigor and Political Efficacy, or, the Making of Adrian Piper." In Witness to Her Art, edited by Rhea Anastas and Michael Brenson, pp. 75-82. Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College.


2007
Barber, Bruce. "Interview with Adrian Piper." In Performance, [Performance] and Performer, vol. 1, Conversations, edited by Marc James Léger. Toronto: YYZBOOKS.


2008


2009


Eichhorn, Maria, and Gerti Fietzek, eds. The Artist's Contract. Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König.

2010
Deuze, Anna. "The Do-It-Yourself Artwork: Participation from Fluxus to New Media."
1981
Barber, Bruce. "Adrian Piper: Western Front, Vancouver." Parachute 23 (Summer): 45–46.

1984

1985

1986

1987
Johnson, Ken. "Being and Politics." In Tongues.

1988
Wilson, Judith. "In Memory of the News and of Our Exclusion?" Challenge to Racism in Society.

1989


Lindsay, Jo Ann. "Images That Get Under the Skin: Artist Adrian Piper, Fighting Racism with 3 Exhibits." Washington Post, June 22.


1990


1991


Knight, Christopher. "Looking Racism in the Face." Los Angeles Times, March 5.


Lindsay, Jo Ann. "Images That Get Under the Skin: Artist Adrian Piper, Fighting Racism with 3 Exhibits." Washington Post, June 22.


Welsh, Marjorie. "In This Corner, Adrian Piper's Agitprop." Arts Magazine 65, no. 7 (March): 43–47.


1992

Bishton, Derek. "Fear of the Other." Creative Camera, February–March, pp. 48–49.


Brandon, Dolores. "Dolores Brandon Interviews Adrian Piper (Highlights)." Highlights excerpted from unpublished interview, October 7, 1992.

At author's website, www.doloresbrandon.com/index/interviews/adrian-piper/


1993


1994


1995


1997


* indicates works that will appear only at MoMA

1. LSD Alice [Study for Alice Down the Rabbit Hole], 1965
   Felt-tip pen, ballpoint pen, and pencil on paper
   11 ½ × 9 in. (30.2 × 22.8 cm)
   Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
   Foundation Berlin
   p. 96

2. LSD Womb, 1965
   Acrylic on canvas
   26 × 26 in. (66.0 × 66 cm)
   Emi Fontana Collection
   p. 99

3. LSD Bloodstream, 1965
   Acrylic on canvas
   12 × 12 in. (30.5 × 30.5 cm)
   Collection Simona & Francesco Fantinelli
   p. 102

4. LSD Mirror Self-Portrait, 1965
   Charcoal and colored pencil on paper
   22 ½ × 17 ¼ in. (57.2 × 43.8 cm)
   Collection Liz and Eric Lefkofsky
   p. 97

5. LSD Abstraction, 1965
   Oil on canvas
   16 × 16 in. (40.7 × 40.7 cm)
   Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
   Foundation Berlin
   p. 98

6. Negative Self-Portrait, 1966
   Felt-tip pen on paper
   17 ½ × 14 ½ in. (45.7 × 37.5 cm)
   Emi Fontana Collection
   p. 99

7. Over the Edge, 1965
   Oil on canvas
   24 × 18 in. (61.0 × 45.7 cm)
   Collection Konrad Baumgartner, Milan
   p. 103

8. LSD Steve Shamstein, 1966
   Oil on canvas
   36 × 48 in. (91.4 × 121.9 cm)
   Collection Simona & Francesco Fantinelli
   p. 100

9. LSD Void, 1966
   Acrylic on canvas
   26 × 40 in. (66.0 × 101.6 cm)
   Emi Fontana Collection
   p. 100

10. LSD Self-Portrait from the Inside Out, 1966
    Acrylic on canvas
    40 × 30 in. (101.6 × 76.2 cm)
    Emi Fontana Collection
    p. 97

11. LSD Self-Portrait with Tamiko, 1966
    Acrylic on canvas
    40 ½ × 30 ½ in. (103 × 77 cm)
    Private collection
    p. 101

12. LSD Self-Portrait, 1966
    Pencil on paper
    5 ¼ × 8 ¼ in. (13.9 × 21.6 cm)
    Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
    Foundation Berlin
    p. 105

13. Phillip Zohn, 1966
    Charcoal on paper
    21 × 17 in. (53.3 × 43.2 cm)
    Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
    Foundation Berlin
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14. LSD Couple, 1966
    Oil on canvas
    18 ½ × 23 in. (46.7 × 60.7 cm)
    Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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15. Alice in Wonderland: Alice and the Pack of Cards, 1966
    Tempera on canvas board
    24 × 18 in. (61.0 × 45.7 cm)
    Collection Konrad Baumgartner, Milan
    p. 103

    Tempera on canvas board
    24 × 18 in. (61.0 × 45.7 cm)
    Collection Konrad Baumgartner, Milan
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17. Alice in Wonderland: Alice Down the Rabbit Hole, 1966
    Tempera on canvas board
    24 × 18 in. (61.0 × 45.7 cm)
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18. LSD Alice sketch #1, 1966
    Rapidograph pen and ink on paper
    8 ½ × 5 ½ in. (21.6 × 14 cm)
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19. LSD Alice sketch #2, 1966
    Rapidograph pen and ink on paper
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20. LSD Alice sketch #3, 1966
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21. Self-Portrait at Age 5 with Doll, 1966
    Oil on canvas with doll
    29 ½ × 19 ½ in. (75.5 × 50.2 cm)
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22. Barbara Epstein and Doll, 1966
    Acrylic on canvas with doll
    41 × 41 in. (105.7 × 104.2 cm)
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23. Untitled Planes Painting, 1966
    Acrylic on wood, mounted on acrylic on canvas
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24. Over the Edge 1 (Study), 1967
    Pencil on notebook paper
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25. Over the Edge 2 (Study), 1967
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26. Over the Edge 3 (Study), 1967
    Pencil on notebook paper
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27. Untitled Self-Portrait, 1967 (later signed “1968”)
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    Collection Sands and Robin Murray-Wassink,
    WASSINIQUE INC., Amsterdam
    p. 111

28. The Barbie Doll Drawings, 1967
    Rapidograph pen, ink, and pencil on thirty-five sheets
    of notebook paper
    Each 8 ½ × 5 ½ in. (21.6 × 14 cm)
    The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired
    through the generosity of Catie and Donald Marron,
    The Friends of Education of The Museum of Modern
    Art, Carol and Morton Rapp, Richard S. Zeisler Bequest
    (by exchange), Committee on Drawings and Prints
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29. Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #1, 1967
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31. Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #4, 1967
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32. Drawings about Paper and Writings about Words #5, 1967
    Pencil and charcoal on notebook paper
    11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm)
    Collection Louise Fishman
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<td>78. Nine-Part Floating Square</td>
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<td>79. Double Recess</td>
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<td>80. Protruded Rectangle Canvas</td>
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<td>82. Sixteen Permutations of a Nine-Part Floating Square</td>
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<td>83. Here and Now</td>
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<td>87. Infinitely Divisible Floor Construction</td>
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<td>88. Five Unrelated Time Pieces (Meat into Meat)</td>
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<td>89. A Conceptual Seriation Arrested at Four Points in Time</td>
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<td>90. Hypothesis: Situation #3 (for Sol LeWitt)</td>
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<td>91. Hypothesis: Situation #5</td>
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<td>92. Hypothesis: Situation #6</td>
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93. **Hypothesis: Situation #10, 1968–69**
Typescript page on mimeographed paper; gelatin silver prints and ink on graph paper; and two photolithograph pages
11 x 8 1/2 in. (29.7 x 21.6 cm) and 11 x 8 1/4 in. (29.7 x 21.6 cm); each 11 x 8 1/2 in. (29.7 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 35

94. **Utah-Manhattan Transfer, 1968**
Pencil and ballpoint pen on cut-and-pasted maps, mounted on two pieces of foam core
First panel 13 x 14 3/4 in. (33.7 x 36 cm); second panel 12 x 12 in. (30.5 x 30.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
pp. 138, 139

95. **Parallel Grid Proposal for Dugway Proving Grounds Headquarters, 1968**
Two typescript pages; ink and colored ink on fourteen sheets of paper; architectural tape on acetate over ink on thirteen photostats; and ink on cut-and-pasted map, mounted on colored paper
Twenty-five sheets each 8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm); two sheets each 8 1/2 x 12 1/4 in. (21.6 x 32.2 cm); three sheets each 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Beth Rudin DeWoody
pp. 140, 141

96. **Art-Sale Event, 1968**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 155

*97. **Two Recent Works, 1968**
Three typescript pages
Each 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 154

98. **Concrete Infinity 6 inch Square "This square should be read as a whole..." 1968**
Typescript page in square mat
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Alan Gravitz and Shashi Caudill
p. 153

99. **Concrete 8" Square "The sides of this square measure 8..." 1968**
Ink and tape on graph paper, mounted on foam core; and typescript page
21 1/2 x 8 1/2 in. (54.6 x 21.6 cm) and 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
p. 152

100. **Seriation #1: Lecture, 1968**
Sound work. Audio, 00:29:17
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

101. **Seriation #2: Now, 1968**
Sound work. Audio, 00:17:36
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

102. **Seriation #2 (Now) (November 11, 1968) (1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 162

103. **Seriation #3 (November 14, 1968) (1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

104. **Untitled Statement ("My present work is involved..."
(1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

105. **Taped Lecture on Seriation (given November 7, 1968) (1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 156

106. **Taped Lecture on Seriation (given October 30, 1968) (1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

107. **Untitled (Elements: Wristwatch A, Wristwatch B) (1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Lawrence Weiner
Genex Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

108. **Untitled ("If you are a slow reader..."
(1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

109. **Untitled ("ENIL EHT..."
(1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

110. **Untitled ("The time needed to read a line..."
(1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 158

111. **Untitled ("This piece stands in a ratio of 1:3..."
(1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 159

112. **Untitled ("The bottom surface area..."
(1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 161

113. **Untitled ("The upper surface area..."
(1968), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 161

114. **Text of a Piece for Larry Wiener, 1/14/69 (1969), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Three typescript pages; and ballpoint pen on graph paper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Note: This work was made for the artist Lawrence Weiner.
pp. 163

115. **0 to 9 (for Vito Acconci) (1969), in Nineteen Concrete Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
p. 170

116. **Three Untitled Projects [for 0 to 9]: Some Areas in the New York Area, 1969**
Three booklets of typescript pages, with paper bands
Each booklet, closed 11 x 8 1/2 x 1/4 in. (27.9 x 21.6 x .3 cm); open 11 x 11 x 1/4 in. (43.2 x 27.9 x .3 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York

**Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces. 1968–69**
Notebook with eight pageworks. Ring binder with twenty-nine sheets in plastic sleeves
Each page 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); binder:
11 x 8 1/2 x 1/2 in. (30.2 x 20.5 x .5 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

117. **Untitled ("First page following..."
(1969), in Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces**
Typescript page and cut-and-pasted paper on onionskin paper over graph paper with text
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
118. Untitled ("The top side of the following page . . .") (1969), in Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces Typescript page Each 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg p. 166

119. Untitled ("The top side of the preceding page . . .") (1969), in Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces Typescript page Each 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

120. Untitled ("1. Maps representing four types . . .") (1969), in Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces Eleven typescript pages Each 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

121. Untitled ("1. Rectangles are located according to co-ordinate position . . .") (1969), in Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces Three typescript pages and felt-tip pen on seven photolithograph postcards Each page 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm); each postcard 3 ½ × 5 in. (8.9 × 12.7 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

122. Untitled ("Two Pieces for 600 ft. Tape . . .") (1969), in Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces Typescript on graph paper 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

123. Untitled ("Proposal to exhibit this piece . . .") (February 10, 1969) (1969), in Nine Abstract Space-Time-Infinity Pieces Typescript page 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg p. 168


126. Streetwork Streettracks I-II. 1969 Two performance soundtracks. Audio, 00:05:15 and 00:47:13 Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

127. Untitled ("The area described by the periphery of this ad . . .") / Area Relocation Series #2. 1969 Advertisement appearing in the Village Voice, May 29, 1969. Newspaper page Approx. 10 ½ × 8 ½ in. (27.8 × 21.9 cm) Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin p. 171

128. Untitled Map/Circle. 1969 Five typescript pages, four photostats, and ink on paper Each 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

129. Untitled: Groups. 1969 Seven black-and-white photographs and texts with pencil on colored paper Each 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin pp. 174, 175

130. Relocated Planes I: Indoor Series, 6/69. 1969 Notebook with six typescript pages; ballpoint pen on four typescript pages; twelve photostats of architectural tape on acetate over photograph on paper; and cut-and-pasted text on twelve sheets of colored paper Each page approx. 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg pp. 148, 149

131. Relocated Planes II: Outdoor Series. 1969 Notebook with six typescript pages; ballpoint pen on four typescript pages; twelve photostats of architectural tape on acetate over photograph on paper; and cut-and-pasted text on twelve sheets of colored paper Each page approx. 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg pp. 150, 151

* 132. World Work: One Event, Six Locations. 1969-70 Carbon copy of typescript page on onionskin 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg


* 134. Context #6. 1970 Two typescript pages; ink on typescript page; and ink and postage stamps on envelope Each page 8 ½ × 11 in. (21.6 × 27.9 cm); envelope 9 ½ × 4 ¾ in. (24.1 × 10.6 cm) Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

135. Context #7. 1970 Seven ring binders with typescript page and ink, pencil, crayon, postage stamps, photographs, and sugar package on paper Each binder 11 × 8 ½ in. (29.8 × 21.9 × 7.6 cm) Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund pp. 176, 177

136. Context #8. 1970 Binder with eighty-one flyers, mails, manifests, and postcards Binder 11 ½ × 10 ¾ × 3 in. (29.8 × 27.3 × 7.6 cm) Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

137. Context #9. 1970 Binder with one typescript page and ballpoint pen and pencil on ninety-two sheets of paper Binder 11 ½ × 10 ¾ × 3 in. (29.7 × 27.3 × 7.6 cm) Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

138. Bach Whistled. 1970 Sound work. Audio, 00:45:00 Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

139. Concrete Infinity Document. 1970 Text on notebook paper; and black-and-white photographs and handwritten text on fifty-six sheets of graph paper Each sheet 10 ½ × 8 ½ in. (27.3 × 21.6 cm) The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Purchased with funds provided by the Drawings Committee pp. 182, 185


142. Untitled Performance at Max’s Kansas City. 1970 Documentation of the performance. Four gelatin silver prints Each 3 ½ × 3 ½ in. (9 × 9 cm) Photographs by Rosemary Mayer Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin pp. 18, 178, 179


145. Infiltration. 6/71. 1971 Carbon copies of two typescript pages on onionskin Each 11 × 8 ½ in. (27.9 × 21.6 cm) General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg p. 56
146. Phillip Zohn Catalyst. 1972
Documentation of the performance. Audio, 01:26:25
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

147. The Mythic Being, Village Voice Ads. 1973-75
Advertisements appearing in the Village Voice.

148. The Mythic Being, 1973
Video excerpted from Other Than Art's Sake (1973),
by Peter Kennedy. 16mm film transferred to video
(black and white, sound), 00:08:00
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

149. The Mythic Being: I/You (Her). 1974
Gouache, tempera, and cut-and-pasted paper
labels on ten black-and-white enlarged photographs
Each 8 x 5 in. (20.3 cm x 12.7 cm)
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund

150. The Mythic Being Cycle I: 2/66. 1974
Documentation of the performance rehearsal.
Audio, 00:14:00
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

151. Stand-In #1: Rob. 1974
Documentation of the interactive performance
with Rob Rubin, with guitar composition by
Adrian Piper. Audio, 00:23:00
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

152. The Mythic Being: Dancing. 1974
Fourteen gelatin silver prints
Each 10 x 8 in. (24.9 x 20.3 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

153. The Mythic Being: I Embody Everything You Most Hate and Fear. 1975
Oil crayon on gelatin silver print
8 x 10 in. (20.3 x 24.9 cm)
Collection Thomas Erben, New York

154. The Mythic Being: Cruising White Women. 1975
Documentation of the performance. Three gelatin silver prints
Each 8 x 10 in. (20.3 x 25.4 cm)
The Eileen Harris Norton Collection

155. The Mythic Being: Getting Back. 1975
Five gelatin silver prints
Each 15 1/4 x 11 1/4 in. (38.7 x 29.8 cm)
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

156. The Mythic Being: I Am the Locus #1-5. 1975
Oil crayon on five gelatin silver prints
Each 8 x 10 in. (20.3 x 25.4 cm)
Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago.
Purchase, gift of Carl Rungius, by exchange
pp. 208, 209

157. The Mythic Being: Doing Yoga. 1975
Six gelatin silver prints
Each 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.3 cm)
Collection Margaret and Daniel S. Loeb

158. The Mythic Being: It Doesn't Matter Who You Are. 1975
Oil crayon on three gelatin silver prints
Each 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.3 cm)
Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas. Museum Purchase: Helen Foresmen Spencer Art Acquisition Fund

159. The Mythic Being: A 108. 1975
Oil crayon on six gelatin silver prints
Each 25 1/2 x 17 1/2 in. (64.7 x 45 cm)
Collection Candace King Weir
pp. 81, 210, 211

160. The Mythic Being: Say It Like You Mean It. 1975
Oil crayon on gelatin silver print
8 x 10 in. (20.1 x 24.9 cm)
Private collection

161. The Mythic Being: Look but Don't Touch (poster from Montclair State College). 1975
Photolithograph (recto and verso)
11 x 17 in. (27.9 x 43.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

162. I/You/(Us). 1975
Photostats mounted on six pieces of foam core
Each 17 x 14 in. (43.2 x 35.5 cm)
Institut d'Art Contemporain, Rhône-Alpes
p. 206

163. Some Reflective Surfaces. 1975-76
Documentation of the audience-oriented performance
at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York,
February 28, 1976. Two gelatin silver prints and 16mm film transferred to video (color, sound), 00:15:27
Prints 19 1/2 x 15 in. (49.5 x 38.1 cm) and 15 x 19 1/2 in. (38.1 x 49.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
pp. 52, 216

164. Art for the Art World Surface Pattern. 1976
Mixed-medium installation. Constructed wood environment, custom-printed wallpaper, stenciled text, audio, and light box
7 ft. 6 in. x 60 in. x 60 in. (213.4 x 152.4 x 152.4 cm)
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.
Purchase through a gift of Shawn and Brook Byers
p. 215

165. This Is Not the Documentation of a Performance. 1976
Ink on screenprint of newspaper article
49 x 45 in. (124.5 x 114.3 cm)
Collection Lonti Ebers, New York
p. 214

166. Aspects of the Liberal Dilemma. 1976
Mixed-medium installation. Black-and-white photograph framed under Plexiglas, audio, and lighting
Photograph 18 x 18 in. (45.7 x 45.7 cm); installation dimensions variable
Source photography: Dick Durrance II/National Geographic (Cape Town, South Africa, 1977)
University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. Gift of the Peter Norton Family Foundation
pp. 84, 217

167. Political Self-Portrait #1 (Sex). 1979
Photostat
29 1/2 x 19 1/2 in. (75.3 x 49.9 cm)
Collection Margaret and Daniel S. Loeb
p. 220

168. Political Self-Portrait #2 (Race). 1978
Photostat
29 1/2 x 19 1/2 in. (75.3 x 49.9 cm)
Collection John Campione
p. 222

169. Political Self-Portrait #3 (Class). 1980
Photostat
29 1/2 x 19 1/2 in. (75.3 x 49.9 cm)
Collection John Campione
p. 222

170. Four Intruders Plus Alarm Systems. 1980
Mixed-medium installation. Constructed wood environment, four photographs, light boxes, audio, and headsets
Dimensions variable
Ohio State University. Courtesy Wexner Center for the Arts. Gift of the artist

171. It's Just Art. 1980
Documentation and video reconstruction of the performance at Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, Wednesday, April 23, 1980.
Video (color, sound), 00:24:20; monitor, photolithograph; ink on notebook paper; ink and cut-and-pasted paper on fifteen gelatin silver prints; and ink and cut-and-pasted paper on three sheets of colored paper
Poster 14 1/2 x 10 1/2 in. (36.9 x 27.5 cm); diagram 8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm); each print 11 1/2 x 8 1/4 in. (30 x 21 cm); each collage 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.3 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
pp. 218, 219

Pencil on paper
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.3 cm)
The Eileen Harris Norton Collection
pp. 83, 224

173. $10.00/Hour Drawing of Pontus Hulten. 1982
Pencil on paper
12 x 8 1/2 in. (30.5 x 22.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
p. 227

174. Portrait. 1983
Photostat
40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm)
Private collection
p. 223
175. Funk Lessons. 1983-84
Documentation of the group performance at University of California, Berkeley, November 6, 1983. Video (color, sound), 00:05:17
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 231

176. Funk Lessons Direct Mail Advertisement. 1983
Letterpress card with gold leaf 5½ x 8¼ in. (14.6 x 22.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 231

177. Funk Lessons: A Collaborative Experiment in Cross-Cultural Transfusion. 1984
Photolithograph 24 x 18 in. (61 x 45.7 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York pp. 60, 230

178. Assorted Anti-Post-Modernist Artifacts. 1984
Sound work. Audio, 00:10:00
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

179. What Will Become of Me. 1985–ongoing
Two framed texts, glass jars, shelf, hair, fingernails, and skin
Dimensions variable
Gift of Gwen and Peter Norton pp. 234, 235

180. A Tale of Avarice and Poverty. 1985
Six texts and enlarged gelatin silver print Each text 11 x 8½ in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm); photograph 37 ¼ x 25 ¼ in. (94.6 x 64.1 cm)

Performance prop. Printed card 1¾ x ¾ in. (5 x 9 cm)
Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts. Museum purchase, The Dorothy Johnston Towne (Class of 1923) Fund
p. 246

182. My Calling (Card) #2 (Reactive Guerrilla Performance for Bars and Discos). 1986-90
Performance prop. Printed card 1¾ x ¾ in. (5 x 9 cm)
Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts. Museum purchase, The Dorothy Johnston Towne (Class of 1923) Fund
p. 246

183. My Calling (Card) #3 (Reactive Guerrilla Performance for Disputed Territorial Skirmishes). 2012
Performance prop. Printed card 1⅛ x ⅝ in. (5 x 9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 246

Exhibition note: Display of My Calling (Card) #1, #2, and #3 includes a mixed-medium installation with pedestal, stenciled sign, and cardholders. The sign is in the collection of the Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts.

184. Vanilla Nightmares #1. 1986
Charcoal and oil crayon on newspaper 23½ x 13⅛ in. (60 x 34.8 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 236

185. Vanilla Nightmares #2. 1986
Charcoal and oil crayon on newspaper 22 x 28 in. (55.8 x 71.1 cm)
Art Institute of Chicago. Margaret Fisher Endowment

186. Vanilla Nightmares #3. 1986
Charcoal and oil crayon on newspaper 25½ x 13⅛ in. (64.5 x 35.2 cm)
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund
p. 236

187. Vanilla Nightmares #4a. 1986
Charcoal on newspaper 23 x 13⅛ in. (58.4 x 34.9 cm)
Sara M. and Michelle Vance Waddell

188. Vanilla Nightmares #5. 1986
Charcoal on newspaper 23⅞ x 27¾ in. (60.3 x 70.5 cm)
The Heithoff Family Collection

189. Vanilla Nightmares #6. 1986
Charcoal on newspaper 23 x 13⅛ in. (58.4 x 34.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 237

190. Vanilla Nightmares #9. 1986
Charcoal and oil crayon on newspaper 22 x 13⅛ in. (55.9 x 34.9 cm)
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund
p. 238

191. Vanilla Nightmares #10. 1986
Charcoal and oil crayon on newspaper 23 x 13⅛ in. (58.4 x 34.3 cm)
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund
p. 239

192. Vanilla Nightmares #11. 1986
Charcoal on newspaper 23½ x 27⅞ in. (69.5 x 69.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

193. Vanilla Nightmares #12. 1986
Charcoal on newspaper 23½ x 13¾ in. (59.7 x 34.3 cm)
p. 240

194. Vanilla Nightmares #13. 1986
Charcoal on newspaper 23⅞ x 13⅛ in. (59.6 x 34.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Charcoal on newspaper 23⅞ x 14 in. (59.7 x 35.6 cm)
Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College Art Collection, Grinnell, Iowa
p. 241

196. Vanilla Nightmares #16. 1987
Charcoal on newspaper 21½ x 26½ in. (55 x 67 cm)
Collection Katharina Faerber p. 242

197. Vanilla Nightmares #17. 1987
Charcoal and oil crayon on newspaper 22 x 14 in. (55.8 x 35.6 cm)
CS, NY

198. Vanilla Nightmares #18. 1987
Charcoal on newspaper 22⅞ x 13¾ in. (56.4 x 34.8 cm)
Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts. Gift of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York; Hassam, Speicher, Betts and Symons Funds p. 243

199. Vanilla Nightmares #19. 1988
Charcoal on newspaper 22½ x 27½ in. (56.5 x 69.2 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin
p. 244

200. Vanilla Nightmares #20. 1989
Charcoal on newspaper 23 x 13 in. (58.4 x 34.9 cm)
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Purchase p. 245

* 201. Close to Home. 1987
Fifteen photographs with text, fifteen texts, and audio, 00:00:55
Each photograph with text 22 x 17 in. (55.8 x 43.1 cm) and each text 17 x 17 in. (27.9 x 43.1 cm)
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Museum purchase funded by Michael and Jeanne Klein

202. An Open Letter to Donald Kuspit (Kuspit Extermination Fantasy). 1987
Pencil on paper 12 x 9 in. (30.5 x 22.8 cm)
University of Colorado Art Museum, Boulder. Gift of the artist
p. 228

203. An Open Letter to Donald Kuspit (Kuspit Strangulation Fantasy). 1987
Pencil on paper 12 x 9 in. (30.4 x 22.8 cm)
University of Colorado Art Museum, Boulder. Gift of the artist
p. 229

204. Think About It. 1987
Mock-up for billboard design. Rephotographed newspaper images, transparent foil, text, and watercolor
14 x 17 in. (35.6 x 43.2 cm)
Sara M. and Michelle Vance Waddell

205. Funk Lessons Meta-Performance. 1987
Documentation of the participatory performance and discussion. Video (color, sound), 00:42:00
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

206. Colored People. 1987
Artist’s book
Publisher: Book Works, London, 1991
The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York
216. Safe #1-4. 1990
Mixed-medium installation. Screenprinted text on four black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core and affixed to the corners of a room, with audio
30\% x 42 in. (76.8 x 106.7 cm); 24\% x 39 1/4 in. (62.5 x 99.7 cm); 30\% x 24 1/4 in. (77.3 x 63.3 cm); and 44\% x 39 in. (112.6 x 99.1 cm).
Source photographs: Ebony; Ebony/General Fords Corp.; Parsons School of Design; AT&T
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
pp. 256, 257

220. Pretend #4. 1990
Screenprinted text on two black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core
Six prints each 12 x 8 in. (30.4 x 20.3 cm) and two prints each 12 x 12 in. (30.4 x 30.4 cm)
The New School Art Collection, New York
p. 253

221. Pretend #2. 1990
Screenprinted text on three black-and-white photographs, mounted on foam core
44 x 22 in. (111.7 x 55.8 cm); 44 x 35 in. (111.7 x 88.9 cm); and 44 x 31 in. (111.7 x 78.7 cm)
Brooklyn Museum, New York. Purchased with funds given by the Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Fund
pp. 254, 255

224. Black Box/White Box. 1992
Video installation. Video (color, sound), 00:30:00, with two constructed wood environments, mirror, four photographs, light box, audio, chairs, tables, tissue boxes, and trash baskets
Dimensions variable
General Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
pp. 268, 269

Screenprinted images and text on three sheets of paper, mounted on foam core
72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm); 72 x 63 in. (182.8 x 160 cm); and 72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm)
Collection Margaret and Daniel S. Loeb
pp. 260, 261

Screenprinted images and text on seven sheets of paper, mounted on foam core
72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm); 9 1/4 x 7 in. (24.8 x 17.8 cm); 24 x 7 1/4 in. (61 x 18.4 cm); 24 x 9 in. (61 x 73.7 cm); 22 x 32 in. (55.9 x 81.3 cm); 20 x 24 1/4 in. (50.8 x 62.9 cm); and 72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm)
Mott-Warsh Collection, Flint, Michigan
pp. 262, 263

Screenprinted images and text on three sheets of paper, mounted on foam core
72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm); 61 1/4 x 36 in. (156.9 x 91.4 cm); and 72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm)
Collection Marilyn and Larry Fields
pp. 264, 265

Screenprinted images and text on four sheets of paper, mounted on foam core
72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm); 61 1/4 x 36 in. (156.9 x 91.4 cm); and 72 x 42 in. (182.8 x 106.7 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
pp. 256, 257

229. Decide Who You Are: Right-Hand (Constant) Panel Text. 1992
Sound work. Audio, 00:52:24
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
pp. 76, 77

Fifteen color photographs and three black-and-white photographs
Each 8 x 12 in. (20.3 x 30.5 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
pp. 76, 77

231. Art Talk: Xenophobia and the Indexical Present. 1993
Documentation of the lecture. Video (color, sound), 01:22:00
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
232. Self-Portrait as a Nice White Lady. 1995
Oil crayon on black-and-white photograph
10 x 8 in. (30.4 x 20.3 cm)
The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York.
Museum purchase made possible by a gift from Barbara Karp Shuster, New York
p. 225

233. Annomayakosha
Text and image on computer monitor
1996
18 x 30 in. (45.7 x 76.2 cm) and 24 x 30 in.
48 x 30 in. (121.9 x 76.2 cm); 48 x 24 in. (121.9 x 61 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
pp. 270, 271

234. Philosophy Talk: A Kantian Analysis of Xenophobia.
1996
Documentation of the lecture. Video (color, sound), 01:24:52
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

Text and image on computer monitor
Dimensions variable
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

Photostat mounted on foam core with laminate
56 x 36 in. (142 x 91 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

Photostat mounted on foam core with laminate
56 x 36 in. (142 x 91 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

Photostat mounted on foam core with laminate
56 x 36 in. (142 x 91 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

239. Das Gebetsrad Quadriert. 2001
Sound work. Audio, 00:32:57
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

240. You/Stop/Watch: A Shiva Japan. 2002
Documentation of the performance. Video (color, sound), 00:42:26
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Stephen Schiffer

242. Everything #23. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Private collection
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243. Everything #25. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Private collection
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244. Everything #26. 2003
Photograph photocopied on vellum over inkjet print, with printed text, combined in plastic sleeve
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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245. Everything #27. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Private collection
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246. Everything #28. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Private collection
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247. Everything #29. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Private collection
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248. Everything #210. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Rothier Faria Collection
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249. Everything #211a. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Private collection
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250. Everything #211b. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Collection Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York

251. Everything #212a. 2003
Photograph photocopied on paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Collection J-E Van Praet
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252. Everything #212b. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Private collection

253. Everything #213. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Collection Lontti Ebers, New York
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254. Everything #214. 2003
Photograph photocopied on vellum over inkjet print, with printed text, combined in plastic sleeve
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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255. Everything #215. 2003
Photograph photocopied on graph paper and sanded with sandpaper, with printed text
8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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256. Everything #3. 2003
Sandwich-board performance
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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257. Everything #4. 2004
Engraved mirror, gold leaf, and wood frame
13 x 10 in. (33 x 25.4 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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258. Everything #5.1. 2004
Engraved Plexiglas and gold leaf, inserted into wall
48 x 24 in. (121.9 x 61 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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259. Everything #6. 2004
Six digital prints on wallpaper
Each print 24 x 24 in. (61 x 61 cm)
Source photographs: Portraits of Abraham Lincoln, Medgar Evers, John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

260. Shiva Dances with the Art Institute of Chicago. 2004
Documentation of the participatory performance-lecture. Video (color, sound), 01:43:18
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261. Passing beyond Passing. 2004
Documentation of the screening, lecture, and discussion. Video (color, sound), 01:38:07
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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262. Construct Madrid. 2005
Sound work. Four audio tracks, each 00:10:05
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

263. Unite (Part I of The Pac-Man Trilogy). 2005
Animated video (color, silent), 00:43:37
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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264. *The Spurious Life-Death Distinction (Part II of The Pac-Man Trilogy).* 2006
Animated video (color, silent), 00:09:22
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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Animated video (color, silent), 00:04:45
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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266. *Philosophy Talk: Intellectual Intuition in Kant’s First Critique and Sanskhyā Philosophy.* 2007
Documentation of the lecture and discussion. Video (color, sound), 01:20:33
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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267. *Everything #19.* 2008
White vinyl text on wall with 70% gray paint
Dimensions variable
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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268. *Everything #18.* 2007
Video (black and white, silent), 00:04:45
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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269. *Adrian Moves to Berlin.* 2007
Documentation of the street performance. Video (color, sound), 01:02:42
Video by Robert Del Principe
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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Interview by Lynn Tjernan Lukkas. Video (color, sound), 01:35:20
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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271. *Adrian Piper Interview: Rationality and the Structure of the Self.* 2007-10
Interview by Robert Del Principe. Video (color, sound), 01:01:43
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

272. *Everything #10.* 2007
Participatory group performance
Commissioned by Creative Time, New York
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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273. *Everything #17.* 2007
Extensive-form decision tree. Vinyl wall print
Dimensions variable
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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274. *Vanishing Point #2.* 2009
Pencil and ballpoint pen on expense report form sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Annette Gentz and Pascal Decker Collection
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275. *Vanishing Point #3.* 2009
Pencil on credit card application sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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276. *Vanishing Point #4.* 2009
Pencil, colored pencil, and ballpoint pen on employment application form sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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277. *Vanishing Point #5.* 2009
Ballpoint pen and pencil on employment application form sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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278. *Vanishing Point #6.* 2009
Ballpoint pen, crayon, and pencil on expense-report form sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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279. *Vanishing Point #6.* 2009
Ballpoint pen, crayon, and pencil on weekly expense-report form sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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280. *Vanishing Point #7.* 2009
Ballpoint pen and colored pencil on inventory form sanded with sandpaper
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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281. *Vanishing Point #8.* 2011
Colored ink, ballpoint pen, pencil, and colored pencil on inventory form
11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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* 282. *Mauer.* 2010
Video installation. Thirty-six monitors, videos with randomly programmed images, and fresh roses
Dimensions variable
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

283. *Everything #21.* 2010-13
Chalk on four vintage blackboards in lacquered wood frames, each covered with the handwritten sentence “Everything will be taken away” and mounted on the wall at eye-level
Each 47 1/4 in. x 8 ft. 2 1/2 in. (120 x 250 cm)
Rennie Collection, Vancouver
p. 295

284. *The Humming Room.* 2012
Voluntary group performance. Full-time museum guard, empty room equipped to echo, and two text signs, one above the door and one adjacent
Dimensions variable
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

Nine lithographs
Each 16 x 9 in. (40.6 x 22.9 cm)
Printer: Poligrafa Obra Grafica, Barcelona
Edition of 20
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

Digital file
Dimensions variable
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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Installation and participatory group performance.
Embossed gold vinyl text on three walls with 70% gray paint, three circular gold reception desks with stools, computer system, contracts, registry of contact data for signatories, three administrators, and self-selected members of the public
Each desk 6 ft. 1/4 in. (183 cm) diam. x 53 in. (160 cm) high; installation dimensions variable
Hamburger Bahnhof-Museum fur Gegenwart, Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin
pp. 20, 303, 309

288. *Imagine [Trayvon Martin].* 2013
Photolithograph
10% x 10% in. (26.5 x 27.3 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
Artist’s note: This work can be downloaded for free at www.adrianpiper.de/art/.
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Documentation of the lecture and discussion. Video (color, sound), 01:49:41
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin

290. *Howdy #6.* 2015
Ceiling-mounted light projection, closed and locked door, and darkened hallway
Projection 36 x 36 in. (91.4 x 91.4 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
Foundation Berlin
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Wall print
31 x 33 in. (78.7 x 83.8 cm)
Collection Adrian Piper Research Archive
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