



«Ruhestörung»

Ein Symposium über die Wirkung
zeitgenössischer Kunst
im öffentlichen Raum

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Input 3

6 concerns about “The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival”

1. The product, shape, construct or the experience of this project should be precisely described and critically published because it is something precise, that's exactly the point. What's precise is my assertion that art - because it's art - has the power of transformation, the power to transform each human being. I do believe this. I rather say believe than think. What's precise is my assertion that art - because it's art - is something autonomous. Autonomy is what gives the artwork its beauty and its absoluteness. What's precise is my assertion that art - because it's art - can provoke a dialogue or a confrontation, from one to one. What's precise is my assertion that art - because it's art - is universal, and to me Universality means: Justice, Equality, the Other, the Truth, the one World. What's precise is the assertion that art - because it's art - can create the conditions of an implication - beyond everything else. And what's precise is the assertion that art - because it's art - is resistance, the resistance to facts, to aesthetical and cultural habits. To me art is - in its resistance - movement, positiveness, intensity and belief. This is what my work is based upon - it's not a theory - it's something I want to work out here. The process of working out my assertions into a form - now - is the artistic work. It is the fieldwork of an artist - of me, artist - here and now.

2. I never made 'relational aesthetic' art, nor ever read the book about it. It's not a problem if I am classified by some lazy and superficial critics as one of those artists, but it's just inaccurate in regard to what I am doing. None of my work in public space ever was a 'relational aes-



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thetic' project, simply because I want to create the relation with the other only if this other is not specifically connected to art. This is and has always been my guideline: to create - through art - a form which implicates the other, the unexpected, the uninterested, the neighbor, the unknown, the stranger. I always wanted to work for this 'non-exclusive' public and it's my most important goal. To address the 'non-exclusive' public means to confront the real, the failure, the non-success, the cruelty of the non-interest, the incommensurability of such a complex situation - I put myself into. But it also means to include the art-lovers, the art-specialists, the art-involved. My work includes them as part of the 'non-exclusive' public but does not target them in particular. I do know - as an artist - that I am always suspected of something (for example of making 'aesthetic relational' art). That's o.k. - I am not complaining - because I have to be the 'usual suspect', but this is also precisely the reason for clarifying what is really 'suspect' and what is just 'usual' ('normal') sovereignty in assuming my role as 'usual suspect' - therefore why "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" deserves to be critically published.

3. What evolves with "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" is friendship. The work is made in and with friendship: The work is made in friendship towards the inhabitants, in a gesture of friendship. This gesture does not even necessarily need to be responded to - since I am doing it - it's both utopian and concrete. What evolves is this gesture of friendship which comes from the friendship between Art and Philosophy. "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" is obviously the celebration of the philosophy of Spinoza - here and now, today - at the Bijlmer. My love for Spinoza is the love for philosophy, for things I do not "understand", the love for the infinitude of thinking. My work is not based on tolerance, respect, compassion or understanding, my work is based on the passion for something. This is utopian but it is concrete at the same time. It's utopian because Spinoza is an issue for no one here and it's concrete because the work is precisely here, at The Bijlmer, because it could have been elsewhere. What evolves as well with "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" - I hope very much so - is the beauty of the precarity of such a work. The precarity of the moment - here and now - the beauty, or the grace, which arises because someone is awake. Because the term 'precarity' is so important to me - I see it as a positive and creative term - I think my work deserves to be precisely dis-



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cussed - in order to clarify and differentiate 'precarity' in an assumed precarious work of art with the terms of 'ephemeral-art', 'community-art' etc.

4. "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" will not be "just another project" amongst others. Because of its complexity, its irreducibility, its location, its exaggeration, its becoming possible and the extreme situation of solitude. "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" is a hyper-complex and extra-ordinary incomparable project. I have been preparing this work for over a year and a half and I am now facing the unpredictable, the new, original, immediate and unexpected. Projects such as "Presence and Production" projects are always entirely different - perhaps not for the unconcentrated and rapid visitor - but for me and for the people of the neighborhood involved in it. This energy and this implication become universal - I believe - beyond just a local experience and event. This is why it deserves to be precisely described and documented. Every one of my projects in public space was never "just another project" - I myself do not think in those terms - and could not, because a project like this requires such an amount of courage, mobilization, freedom of spirit, power and energy, that there would be absolutely no chance in succeeding if I considered it as only "another project". My involvement and engagement on site can give evidence of this.

5. I understand that my work needs to be more compelling, but as always, my work has to compel - or try, as an artwork, to be compelling to the other. I myself - as the artist - must refuse to analyse my work before doing it, before experiencing it. This is the difficult point - and I am not trying to avoid it - but you must also understand that the artist needs to do the work first, before (self)-analysing it and that's the crucial act of resistance. This has always been my guideline. I call it acting in "headlessness". I am aware that with "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" as in other works, it could be interpreted as a lack of rigor, but I believe that in order to do the work, it's the price to pay - as an artist - and I am ready to pay for it, first. This is also why I think my work deserves to be critically discussed - for once - on a level which englobes this issue as paradox or problematic. Because I, who am not a theorician nor a 'practician', must go beyond this argumentation in order to give form coming from me and from me only. I want to do my work in "Low control" - which could also be misunderstood as lack of ri-



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gor - but acting in "Low control" means to me refusing "to control", it means put myself at a level of "low control", like someone on ground, at bottom, overwhelmed, completely submerged but still unresigned, unreconciled and (of course) uncynical.

6. When I invite philosophers and art historians (Marcus and Vittoria, Alexandre and Daniel - as "Presences and Producers") but also when I invite (punctually) other philosophers to intervene - I do this in friendship. The focal-point is to share together the friendship towards Art and Philosophy, to understand "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" as an artwork which asserts this friendship and produces friendship. My goal is not to make a 'cultural event' and I have already - I think - worked out how to avoid it, (location, time, information modes, etc.). Therefore, in order to specifically work-out the difference between a cultural project and my artwork, my work deserves to be described critically and precisely and to be published in the form of a book.

Thomas Hirschhorn, 2009