

PIPER MARSHALL
25 Questions with

BUSINESS HOURS

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WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HISTORICAL ARTWORK?

Impossible to say. One that comes to mind is this untitled performance Adrian Piper did at Max's Kansas City in 1970. She walked into the bar/restaurant on Park Avenue South off Union Square in New York, wearing long sleeve gloves, an eye mask, ear and nose plugs.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Warhol describes Max's as the "ultimate hangout," the showcase for all the latest fashion changes. Kids skipped openings, going straight there, and before stepping in, checked themselves out at the "last mirror before Max's" by the bank next door. So I imagine Piper catwalking in there, all dressed down, being this total weirdo, people checking her out, eyes going up and down, and her bumping into people and tables not seeing anything, being concerned with her consciousness not to be co-opted and modified by the collective "Art Self-Conscious Consciousness," turning herself into a privatized "silent, secret, passive object." I love this particular humor most of her works have, even the stiffest ones. And I guess, I've had this feeling before, not wanting to be a collaborator, not being absorbed.

WHAT IS THE "COLLECTIVE ART SELF-CONSCIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS?"

I see her performance as a rejection of this crowd, her crowd, not wanting to comply with the status quo. She's protecting her autonomy, but intentionally right in the middle of the herd. By bumping into people, she is addressing herself to them, but not asking them for permission to do so. She is asserting strongly her individuality, her point of view, her way. This is a powerful feminist gesture. And I guess this made everyone out there pretty uncomfortable, of course. Women were/are supposed to be silent, secret, passive objects. But cleverly she uses it and turns it into quite the opposite: she is loudly, publicly, actively affirming her subjectivity.

HOW ELSE MIGHT YOU PERCEIVE NEGATION?

I would rather call it refusal. This performance somehow resonates with my current work. I often question how the picture could be different, how my art world can be a place where I feel better, where relationships between people are healthier and caring, basically a place where I would be willing to continue to evolve within. Like recently trying to change people's mindset regarding artists' fees in Switzerland.

WHERE HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED RESISTANCE?

Sometimes from the artists themselves but mostly from institutions. I feel, these days, I'm constantly practicing defense. Some institutions perceive my ventures as attacks or threats, an institution director even called it a "Trojan Horse." I've organized this summer a discussion at a Kunsthalle and we addressed the question of aggression. Is defense aggression? Institutions are constantly practicing micro-violence towards artists. Who is aggressive to who? For this actual event, I was offered 100 Swiss Francs less than a male artist for the same kind of contribution.

HOW HAVE YOU CHANGED MINDS?

I guess word of mouth has been the most effective. People are starting to voice their disagreement with the current situation. Today (only) four Swiss art institutions are systematically paying artists, but the question now is how much? Things are visibly moving, and that helps against the latent exhaustion. Some artists told me they started to ask for fees and received them. But others are not even in positions enabling them to make such demand. Artists need to collectivize, to share information with one another, to talk about money. Together we will be able to shift things.

WHAT DO YOU THINK AN INSTITUTION SHOULD BE?

Institutions are shaped by a series of actions and processes, and their repetition. I think it's important to confront institutions with their habits, routines, procedures, strategies, conventions, roles or organizational forms.

CAN INSTITUTIONS OFFER CARE?

They are already, and if they harm, they are doing it unwittingly. Also it is not us and them. These are deep systemic problems, reproduced over and over. But to care is to be accountable, to challenge your practices, to listen to who you work with, trust their feelings. Institutions should provide space and time for discussion. For example, I wasn't offered (so far) any fee for this email interview. It was not even addressed. People still believe that exposure will pay your rent.

IS REFUSAL ADDITION OR SUBTRACTION?

If we take the example of fees, which is a certain refusal of the status quo, some artists fear the loss of freedom, they fear alienation. But I think I would gain

freedom if I'm paid for my work, and some peace of mind. I rather fear alienation from the art market.

WHY ALIENATION FROM THE ART MARKET?

Don't get me wrong, galleries do provide care, but the speculative market has its own way. I presume, when artists will start to get properly paid for their work by institutions, their production will drastically change, it will certainly be less object- and craft-oriented.

NOT FROM THE INSTITUTION?

I do think we need spaces that are not institutional to be able to talk about the problems we encounter with institutions. These places and moments are rare.

DO YOU SEE THE ART MARKET AND THE ART INSTITUTION AS EXCLUSIVE?

I mean, this is no news.

WHAT IS INSIDE OF IT?

Institutional whiteness. Institutional sexism. Meritocracy. Exceptionalism.

WHAT IS OUTSIDE?

Reflection on these issues. At least in Switzerland.

IN YOUR OWN WORK, HOW DO YOU CHOOSE A SUBJECT TO REPURPOSE?

I guess it comes from a certain urgency regarding situations I've been confronted to or discussions I've had with friends. And it becomes just necessary, at the present moment, to address these thoughts. It's a collective process to me.

ARE THESE SITUATIONS SPECIFIC OR UNIVERSAL?

Both.

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REPURPOSING AND APPROPRIATION?

I would rather say that I quote artworks.

WHAT ARE THE ETHICS OF EACH?

I'm wary of ethics as a concept. It is too closely related to morality or right/wrong behavior.

HOW WOULD YOU FRAME IT INSTEAD?

Nothing we do or say comes out of nowhere. We are constantly appropriating then repurposing at any moment of our lives. I'm just mentioning where some of it comes from, to pay homage to it, as a sort of debt I have towards those who inspired me.

QUOTING AS DISTANCE OR PROXIMITY?

They are my teachers, I'm testing their tools and checking how effective they are in a new context. It is a learning process to me, but also some kind of device. As a woman, and of color, there were times when I needed a megaphone, one that has been legitimized, so people would pay attention to what I would say. But today I see my quotees more as part of my virtual and, sometimes actual, affective crowd.

DOES QUOTING REQUIRE GIVING FEES?

Quoting requires referencing.

DO YOU STRESS ABOUT DOCUMENTATION?

No.

AND HOW DOES IT CIRCULATE?

I try not to have any videos of my performances online. I want people to show up.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO COMMUNICATE TO THE PRESENT?

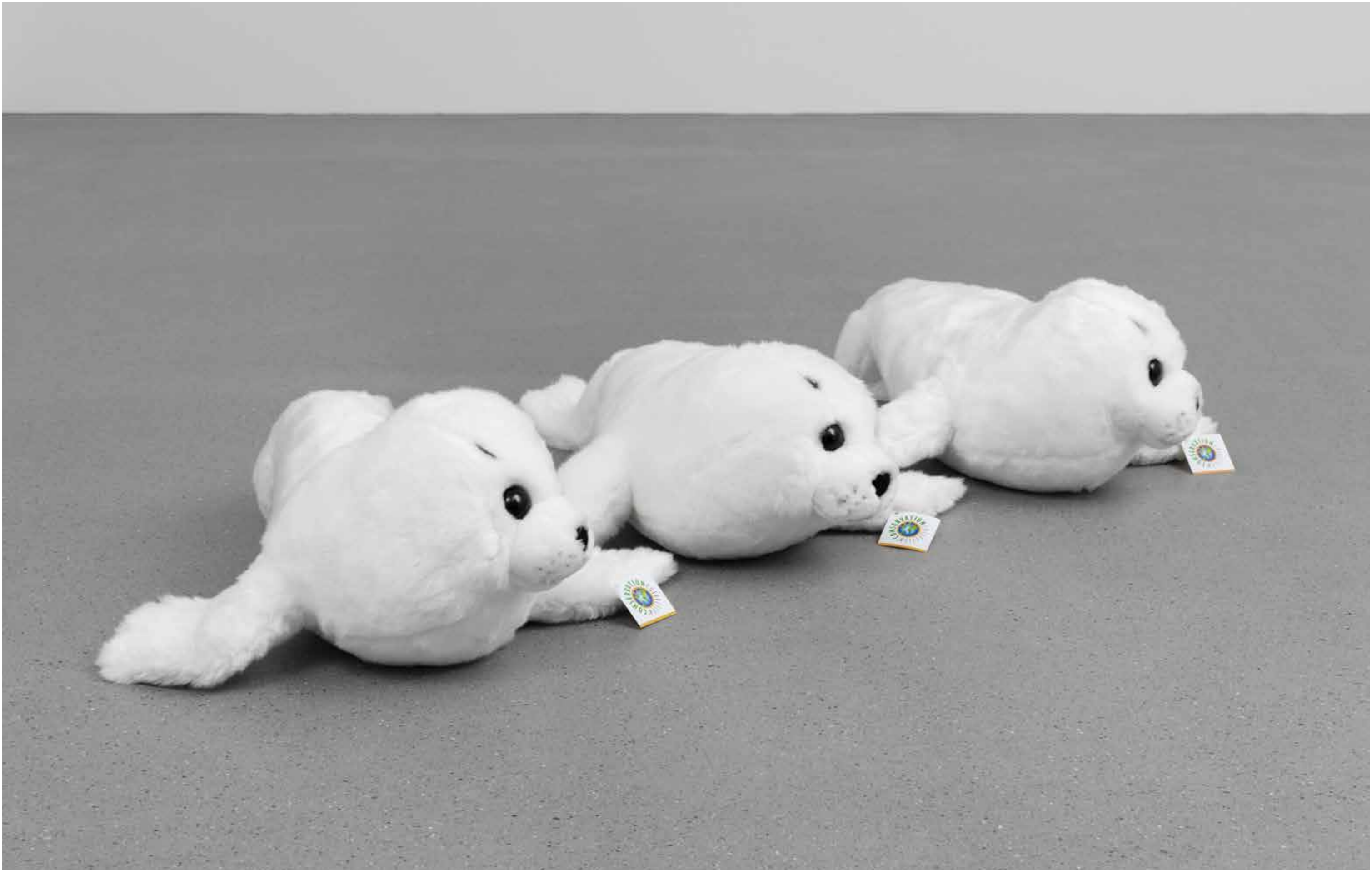
Collectivize.

IS GOSSIP MORE POTENT THAN HEARSAY?

I mean, gossip is a specialized section of hearsay. Hearsay is basically just a rumor. Gossip is more complex, it is discursive, and the subject matter is people, but absent people. As a particular type of conversation I think its potential lies in what it generates: affective bonds, common values, knowledge, trust, emotions, friendship and communities. It is at the same time intimate and public, unstable, unexpected, ephemeral, rapid, subjective, speculative and subversive. It can cause trouble but sometimes necessary trouble. It can surely be the base for a revolution. Use it, but use it well.



Oliveiros, 2017 Installation view, *Deep Listening*, First Continent, Baltimore, 2017 Photo: © Nate Grossman (above)
Mullicans, 2018 Installation view, *Feelings Are Facts*, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich, 2018 Photo: © Annik Wetter (opposite page)
Business Hours Kimberly Clark, 2018 Installation view, *Age of Trash Triumphant*, Kimberly Klark, New York, 2018 Photo: © Kimberly Klark (p. 182)



Shermans (Frankfurter), 2018 Installation view, Welcome to My Rectangle, VIS, Hamburg,
2018 Photo: © Fred Dott (below) Schlingeloffs, 2018 Installation view, Feelings Are Facts, Galerie
Maria Bernheim, Zurich, 2018 Photo: © Annik Wetter (opposite page) Ideas, 2015 (p. 188-189)

