

The Headless Artist:

An Interview with Thomas Hirschhorn on the Friendship Between Art and Philosophy, Precarious Theatre and the Bijlmer Spinoza-festival

Ross Birrell: Why are you passionate about Spinoza?

Thomas Hirschhorn: I am passionate about Spinoza because the lecture of *Ethics* had a real impact on me and I am passionate about Philosophy in general because I enjoy not understanding everything. I like the fact that, in Philosophy, things remain to be understood and that work still has to be done. "Ethics" is one of the books which, for me, still remains to be understood. What I have made out so far, is that *Ethics* is a powerful attempt to fight obscurantism and idealism. *Ethics* – a book I often look into – is overwhelming in form, logic and clarity. Today more than ever it is necessary to confront this. Reading Spinoza means: accepting to insist on receptivity and sensuality without the idea of a certain type of infinity. According to Deleuze, whoever is interested by philosophy, should start with Spinoza's *Ethics*. When you read Spinoza everything is transcendence. But if everything is transcendence then there exists no transcendence. If not transcendence, then everything is immanence. But if everything is immanence, there is no immanence. Spinoza presents a concept devoid of transcendence and devoid of immanence. It is the concept – as Deleuze shows – of Here and Now, the concept of Life – Life as a subject without God. An active subject, a subject of pleasure and leisure. A responsible, gay, assertive subject.

RB: Why did you choose to do the Spinoza-festival in Bijlmer How familiar were the residents of Bijlmer with Spinoza prior to the festival? And were they aware of the potential affinity in terms of immigration? For example, many of the present residents of Bijlmer are immigrants from Suriname, a former Dutch colony and Spinoza arrived in Amsterdam as a foreigner, the son of Portuguese Jewish refugees from the Spanish Inquisition? You have said previously: 'In my works in public spaces the context is never the issue' Could the 'Spinoza-festival' have taken place anywhere?

TH: "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival" could have taken place in a different neighbourhood than the "Bijlmer". This work could have been built in another city, another country or another continent. Because Art can provoke a Dialogue or a Confrontation – from one to one



Thomas Hirschhorn, "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival", 2009. 'The Construction Team' Amsterdam, 2009. Photo: Anna Kowalska

– Art can do this everywhere, in the Bijlmer, but anywhere else as well. And because my work is mentally transplantable, it aims to experience its universality.

RB: ‘Foreignness to the world’, claimed Adorno, ‘is an element of art: Whoever perceives it other than as foreign fails to perceive it at all.’¹ As with the *Deleuze monument* (Avignon, 2000) and *Bataille monument* (Kassel, 2002), the *Bijlmer Spinoza-festival* reproduces institutions of the public sphere and commercial life of society (exhibition space, library, theatre, internet café, bar, etc.) formed with familiar everyday materials (tape, cardboard, foil, Perspex, polythene, books, tv sets, computers, etc.). Paradoxically, however, this resemblance is productive of a kind of ‘foreignness’: of the structure to its surroundings, its non-functioning co-existence with community, as an autonomous artwork in society. Do you feel the *Monument* or the *festival* remains essentially foreign to the community regardless of the level of ‘participation’ involved?

TH: As always I wanted to do a universal Artwork. I did not conceive “The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival” as something which implements “foreignness”. Because Art is universal and because – as always – I aim my work towards a “non-exclusive audience” there was no issue about “foreignness” with the inhabitants of the Bijlmer.

But through the daily experience of “The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival” I realized that something unexpected was being shared with the inhabitants of the Bijlmer: the fact of being a “foreigner”. I, myself, was the “foreigner” in their neighbourhood. My project, my will to do it, my everyday battle to keep it standing was the “foreignness”. It was neither the aesthetic nor the production of my work that created “foreignness” but only the fact of decision to do it. This “foreignness” or “strangeness” allowed me to be in equal contact with the Other. As the artist I was the stranger. Being the artist, I must always accept to be the foreigner. This is my starting-point for works done together with inhabitants and has always been. It is not I – the artist – who can help, not I – the artist – who knows how to help, not I – the artist – with the pretension to help, but instead I’m the one – the artist – to have a project and to need help in order to carry it out! I cannot do it alone, I cannot do it without your help!



Thomas Hirschhorn, "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival", 2009. 'Spinoza Library' Amsterdam, 2009. Photo: Vittoria Martini

RB: Can you elaborate on the importance of the ‘guidelines’ of ‘presence and production’ for the Bijlmer Spinoza-festival? The self-demand that you be present throughout the two month long production seems to be more important to the concept of the work than simply to protect the work from vandalism (as was experienced with the *Deleuze Monument* in Avignon and the *Raymond Carver-Altar* in Glasgow). Is there a ‘dual perspective’ to be brought to bear in the Bijlmer Spinoza-festival, implied in the combined use of these terms ‘presence’ and ‘production’ - a dialectic of force and consent, akin to the demands upon the actors in ‘precarious theatre’?

TH: “Presence” and “Production” are terms I use for specific projects which require my

presence and my production. It means to make a physical statement here and now. I believe that only with presence – my presence – and only with production – my production – can I provoke through my work, an impact on the field. “Presence” and “Production” is fieldwork, it means confronting reality with the real. “Presence” and “Production” is the form of a commitment toward myself but also directed toward the inhabitants. “Presence” and “Production” is the key to initiate a relationship based on equality – one to one – with the unexpected. “Presence” and “Production” allow me to come in contact with the Other if I give something from myself – first. I know what this means, I know what it demands and I know what I must do in order to achieve this. “Presence” and “Production” are forms of implication towards the neighbourhood through the fact of my presence and my production. A project such as “The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival” is only possible because of the three months of presence and production, not only my presence and my production, but also thanks to the presence and production of Marcus Steinweg, the philosopher with his daily lectures, the presence and production of Vittori Martini, the art historian, with her daily implication as “Ambassador” and thanks to the presence and production of Alexandre Costanzo, the editor with his production of the Daily Newspaper.

RB: How does your turn toward ‘Precarious Theatre’ develop or advance your work in relation to precarious form? Has its direct use of actor-spectator relations been informed by experimental theatre directors such as Jerzy Grotowski, in terms of poor materials, or Augusto Boal, in terms of developing the inter-changeability of the actor and audience developed from Brecht?

TH: “Precarious Theatre” will be the title of one of my next works. It comes directly from my “Spinoza-Theatre” experience which I made and integrated into “The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival”. I will develop this experience I had in Amsterdam, of directing the actors from the neighbourhood during two months. I cannot respond precisely to your question as I am not familiar with the two names you mention. But for sure I don’t want to be a theatre-director! I want to integrate a theatrical component into my work, during which the work becomes stage and where people are acting in the work. I call this “Precarious Theatre” because it only lasts for a short moment.



Thomas Hirschhorn, "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival", 2009. 'Child's Play' Amsterdam, 2009. Photo: Anna Kowalska

RB: Jean-Luc Nancy writes “Political” would mean a community ordering itself to the unworking of its communication, or destined to this unworking: a community consciously undergoing the experience of its sharing.’² If the Bijlmer Spinoza-festival is not a work of political art but an example of doing art politically, might it also be considered - in all its multiplicity and diversity of forms and events, its ‘not functioning’ experience, co-existence and autonomy shared with a community - as an ‘unwork’ of art, or an ‘unworking of art,’ and thus ‘political’ in Nancy’s terms?

TH: I do not conceive my work as an outcome of philosophers' concepts or of theory. I haven't read the book by Nancy you mention. You must be aware that I really do not read a lot – my friends know this – as I have enough to struggle with and think about with my work (I have not read half of the references you give in this interview). Furthermore I am not constructing my work on Philosophy, theory or thoughts from others but – because I am an artist today – perchance there are moments and spaces of similar dynamics. I am very, very happy about this. I am ready and open for these rare and graceful moments of encounters in concepts and forms which – together with Marcus Steinweg – we call “Friendship between Art and Philosophy”.

I want to point out that when saying ‘not-functioning’ concerning “The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival” or other of my works of Art, it is crucial not to forget that an artwork can be something which does not function. (I do not say that Art has no Function but Art does not have to function!) Today the question of functioning (“does it function? does it 'work'? Is it – then – a success or not?”) arises automatically and quickly as criteria for “good” or “bad” art. This is stupid and easy. I think that the problem is not about doing art which “functions” or “works” but to do an artwork which implicates, which creates an event and which can provoke an encounter or allow encounters. But this is something which cannot be measured, there is no “yes” or “no”, there is no success or failure. Art it is something which reaches us beyond such criteria. To believe in this power of Art is to me what “working politically” as an artist means, trying to resist in and with the work to the pressure of functionality.

RB: Writing on Spinoza Deleuze claims: ‘Writers, poets, musicians, filmmakers – painters too, even chance reader – may find that they are Spinozists; indeed, such a thing is more likely for them than for professional philosophers. It is a matter of one’s practical conception of the “plan”. It is not that one may be a Spinozist without knowing it. Rather, there is a strange privilege that Spinoza enjoys something that seems to have been accomplished by him and no one else. He is a philosopher who commands an extraordinary conceptual apparatus, one that is highly developed, systematic, and scholarly; and yet he is the quintessential object of an immediate, unprepared encounter, such that a nonphilosopher, or even someone without any formal education, can receive a sudden illumination from him, a “flash”.’³ Are “the fiery words of Spinoza” also fanning the flames of the general conflagration of *It’s Burning Everywhere* (DCA, 19 September-29 Nov 2009)?

TH: Again, I am not illustrating Philosophy with my work. I am not reading Philosophy to do my Artwork and I am not reading Philosophy to justify my work. I need Philosophy for my life, to try to find responses to the big questions such as “Love”, to name one of the most important to me. For this, I need Philosophy – please believe it! But of course if connections, dynamics, influences or coincidences exist in my work – as you pointed out in “It’s Burning Everywhere” – I am absolutely happy. I want to be touched by grace, without belief in any correlation to genius or obscureness or that it has something to do with artistic ignorance. If you are working today in the historical field of the moment you live in, confronting all kinds of complexities, struggling with all kinds of paradoxes and contradictions, if you are still working and continue listening only to yourself, it is only normal that at some point your work is going to be a “flash”. Your quotation of Deleuze is truly an important citation to me, because it explains why I started, myself, to read Spinoza. As Deleuze with Spinoza, I – as an artist – admire how great Philosophers had interest and commitment in other thinkers and how these great Philosophers are the most able to explain the concepts of other Philosophers with their own words.

RB: Alain Badiou says in *Saint Paul* ‘it is necessary to pay careful attention to Paul’s

lexicon, which is always extremely precise.⁴ In my experience you always take great care and consideration over the language you use, via deployment of a similarly ‘precise lexicon’ to articulate your position as an artist and to distance yourself from definitions drawn from the critical vocabularies of ‘relational aesthetics,’ ‘community-based’ or ‘public art’. Why is a commitment to self-determination in writing necessary for you as an artist? Is it an ethical obligation?

TH: One thing I really understand is that in philosophy terms and notions are important. Philosophers use words with preciseness and exactitude. Philosophers are sculpting concepts following their logic in the strongest way they can. The words they use are important tools to them in order to create new terms in philosophy. I admire that enormously.

As an artist I am often surprised by effortless, inexact and empty terms or notions used in order to “explain” an artwork. I am astonished by the repeated and thoughtless use of terms in art critique. As the artist – I refuse to use them myself when I think it is not the right word to describe what I want. I have to invent my own terms and I want to insist with my own notions. I know – as an artist – that to give Form is the absolute necessity and that writing is not a necessity, but writing helps me clarify, it helps me fix and be committed to things.

Writing is a help to understand, to touch, to speak about something. But it’s only a help, my work does not depend on it. Therefore, when writing, I try – at least as the artist – to use the terms I think appropriate in relation to my work. And as a help, it is an ethical obligation towards my own work.

RB: Your work has had a long engagement with precarity and the precarious and you have used the term repeatedly in terms of materials, structures, the situation in public spaces and the question of form, each of which speak to the precarity of objects, power relations, communities and, above all, life. It seems that recently thinkers have begun to catch up with your understanding of *precarious life* asserted through form. For example, Judith Butler, *Precairous Life* (2004) and more recently *Frames of War* (2009) where she states: ‘Precariousness implies living socially, that is, the fact that one’s life is always in some sense in the hands of the other.’⁵ Has your adherence to precarity been informed by thinkers of ‘the other’ such as Butler or Levinas?

TH: Again no, my adherence to precarity comes from my life, from my experience, from what I love – from the precarious forms I love – and from what I understand of it. I am really pleased to hear that Judith Butler, Emmanuel Levinas and also Manuel Joseph (a French writer and friend) have, among many others, developed serious thoughts about “Precariousness” but I must tell you, I learnt this myself and I am not going to learn something more about it. On the contrary, my tendency is – I admit – to avoid going “deeper” – because I need, yes I need, my own, my own strange, wrong, headless misunderstood, bad, stupid – but – my fucking own relation to preserve and to develop. This is not an opposition to theory or a refusal of theory, absolutely not. It has to do with being open to what comes from my own, to what comes only from my own. It just makes me happy to hear that I am not alone with the interest in “Precarity”. And I have the ambition in doing my work to intervene – through the notion of “Precarity” – in the field of Art.

RB: On the Spinoza-Monument at W139 Amsterdam 1999 you state that you wanted some elements to be ‘more overtaxing to myself’, and in the text ‘Doing art politically: What does this mean?’ you talk about ‘not economizing oneself; self-expenditure ... undermining oneself; being cruel vis-à-vis one’s own work...’ In terms of expenditure, this equates to an economy without reserve, of giving yourself without reserve and shares a logic of sacrifice familiar to the writings of Artaud or Georges Bataille on the ‘potlatch’. As the language of sacrifice and annihilation at work here suggests (you make

altars after all), does the work ever reach the final point of ‘self-cancellation’ or creative ‘auto-destruction’?

TH: There is a difference between self-expenditure, being cruel vis-à-vis my own work, not-economizing myself and what you call “self-cancellation” and “auto-destruction”. I want to undermine myself – my person – in doing my work – I do not want to undermine my work! I don’t want to take myself seriously in doing my work but I want to do and take my work seriously! I want to give everything I can in order to do my work but I do not want to give my work away! The gift is not the work itself – the gift is to do it and to do it in such a way! What I love in the notion of “gift” is the offensive, demanding and even aggressive part in it, it’s the part that provokes the Other to give more! It’s the part which implies a response to the gift, a real and active response. The gift or the work must be a challenge, that is why I am not using “auto-destruction”. “Self-cancellation” to me is related to narcissism, to tearfulness and I want to resist to the fashionable tendency to self-criticism. Those terms are not related to my understanding of Art as an assertion, an absolute assertion of form, as an engagement, as a commitment to pay for, as a mission, as a never-ending conflict, as a strength and as a position.

RB: You write: ‘I want to show my work everywhere, without making any distinction between important and unimportant places, just as I don’t want to distinguish between important and unimportant people.’⁶ This position coincides with Rancière’s claim: ‘There is no more a privileged form than there is a privileged starting point. Everywhere there are starting points, intersections and junctions that enable us to learn something new...’⁷ Is equality the foundation and condition of the universal artwork? Is such universality potentially a form of emancipation?

TH: Universality is constitutive to Art. It’s something very important to me. One can say that Art is universal because its Art. If it is not universal it is not an Artwork, it’s something else. I do oppose the term “Universality” to Culture, Tradition, Identity, Community, Religion, Obscurantism, Globalization, Internationalism, Nationalism or Regionalism. I experienced with my Artwork – and not only with the works in public space – that Universality is truly essential. There are other words for Universality: The Real, The One World, the Other, Justice, Politics, Aesthetics, Truth, the “Non-exclusive Audience” and Equality. I believe – yes, believe - in Equality. And I believe that Art has the Power of transformation. The power to transform each human being, each one and equally without any distinction. I agree that equality is the foundation and the condition of Art.

RB: Would you regard yourself as an Ignorant Artist?

TH: I am not an ignorant artist – because it’s better not to be ignorant, as artist! Of course – I love the beautiful book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* and its fantastic enlightening title, but I am not a Schoolmaster – I am not even teaching Art – I am an artist! I, myself, am and want to be a Headless artist. I want to act – always – in headlessness, I want to make Art in headlessness. “Headlessness” stands for: doing my work in and with precipitation, restlessness, acceleration, generosity, expenditure, energy (energy = yes! quality = no!), stupidity, self-transgression, blindness and excess. I never want to economize myself and I know – as the artist – that I sometimes look stupid facing my work, but I have to stand out for this ridiculousness.

RB: To state ‘I’m a Worker-Soldier artist’ suggests the identity of the ‘partisan’ and elsewhere, in relation to the philosophers you have used in your work, you have insisted that you are not a specialist but a fan. Do you see a connection between ‘the partisan’

and ‘the fan’?

TH: With “worker” I wanted to point out the importance of the work, the importance of production and the importance to do it. Being a “worker” also means to refuse the terms “genius”, “star”, “prince or princess” and the term “child of miracles”. With “soldier” I want to point out that I have to fight for my work, for my position, for my form, I want to point out that this fight is never won but also never lost, I want to point out that doing art is a perpetual battle and I want to point out that to be an artist means to have a mission. With “artist” I want to point out that I have to stand up, I have to assert and I have to give form to what is important to me. I ask myself; does my work have the power to reach a public beyond the public already interested in art? Can I, through my artwork, create and establish a new term for art? And I ask myself: can my work create the condition to develop a critical corpus? A fan is somebody who loves beyond justification, beyond explication and beyond reason. Being a fan means to love.

RB: The Swiss writer, Robert Walser who led a ‘wandering and precarious existence’ has been important to you (*Robert Walser Tränen, 1995, Robert Walser Kiosk 1999* (Universität Zürich-Irchel, Zurich) and he appears more than once in your *Emergency Library* (2003). Walser speaks of the ‘courage to create’ and commands: ‘The poet must ramble, must audaciously lose himself, must always risk everything, everything, must hope, should do so, should only hope.’⁸ How important is Walser to you? Do you share Walser’s hope *in extremis*?

TH: Robert Walser is one of the most inspired and inspiring Swiss writers. Because of the strength and power of his soul, Robert Walser is a Swiss hero. He reconciles me with my home country – with the specificity of living in Switzerland – which can create graceful writers such as Robert Walser. I love his work which is the work of existential perdition and existential uncertainty. Robert Walser himself lost his way between rebellion and gaiety. I love Robert Walser and – as many others – I am part of the “Tanner family”. And as many, I love his work with a possessive, selfish and exclusive love – I won’t share this love with anyone else, I alone have “understood” Robert Walser!

RB: Might another name for the non-exclusive audience be *Multitude*?

TH: No. “Multitude” to me is an imprecise and an elastic term. I invented the term of “non-exclusive audience” and I want to insist upon it, because it permits me to clearly address my work to an audience, to somebody, to a person, to one singular person. The “non-exclusive audience” is the term which allows me to direct my work toward the Other. The Other or the “non-exclusive audience” is inclusive. So the “non-exclusive audience” includes also the “spectre of evaluation” (The Institution director, Art critic, Curator, Gallerist, Collector, Art historian and Art professor). I think that – as an artist – I can’t ever direct my work toward the “spectre of evaluation”. The “non-exclusive audience” permits me not to focus my work on the “spectre of evaluation” but to include them beside an unexpected and open audience. Furthermore, the “non-exclusive audience” is able to judge the work of the artist – directly from the heart – whereas the “spectre of evaluation” only evaluates the work.

RB: In his discussion of Gramsci, Ernesto Laclau comments, ‘The theory of hegemony presupposes, ... that the “universal” is an object both impossible but necessary’.⁹ Is your quest to produce the universal artwork both impossible but necessary?

TH: Each Artwork is impossible. It is impossible because it’s just not necessary to do a possible Artwork! An Artwork is an impossible form and an impossible assertion and it’s

impossible to defend it. Doing an Artwork – I think – is not “impossible but necessary” but it is: “impossible and necessary”. An Artwork must possess both: “impossibility and necessity”. Don’t both together make sense? Don’t both together create density, charge and energy? Don’t “impossibility and necessity” – together – give beauty?

RB: Is there a connection for you between your insistence upon the autonomy of the art work and autonomous political movements, for example in political anarchism or the Italian autonomists? I’m recalling here the improvised structure *Bridge* (2000) which joined the Whitechapel Art Gallery to neighbouring Freedom Press in Angel Alley in the East End of London and also the participation in the Bijlmer Spinoza-festival of Antonio Negri.

TH: No, there is no connection that I could establish. I just believe in the autonomy of Art – because it’s Art – and I do think that it is the autonomy of an Artwork which gives it its absoluteness. “Autonomy” does not mean self-sufficiency or self-enclosure, “autonomy” is something which stands up by itself, which is sovereign and proud.

I invited Toni Negri because I admire his work and his life. And of course for his beautiful book: *The Savage Anomaly: The Power of Spinoza’s Metaphysics and Politics*. His lecture and the small seminar he held, during which he explained his “first love” of the notion “precarity”, was for me a moment of grace at “The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival”.



Thomas Hirschhorn, "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival", 2009. 'Lectures/Seminars : Toni Negri' Amsterdam, 2009. Photo: Vittoria Martini

RB: In ‘Doing art politically: What does this mean?’ you write, ‘I decided to position my work in the form- and force-fields of Love, Politics, Philosophy and Aesthetics’. This seems to echo the four categories of truth adhered to by Alain Badiou who also puts love ‘which alone effectuates the unity of thought and action in the world’ on an equal footing with philosophy, politics and art because of its capacity to act as a universal power. Is love for you another name for universality?

TH: When I decided myself upon these four notions as constitutes for my force- and form-fields, I wanted to use four terms or notions that define a sort of conflict zone – an area that my work always wants to touch. That is why: Love, Philosophy, Politics, Aesthetics. My work need not cover these zones equally or entirely, but I always want to touch all four terms of this zone within my work. But to me, the two terms “Politics” and “Aesthetics” are much more “negatively loaded” than the others two terms “Love” and “Philosophy” which are much more “positively loaded”. Within the force- and form-field itself, I want problematic and conflict to be clearly pointed out so that my form- and force-field is itself understood as a zone of conflict as an “in-fight”.

I am not afraid to say I love the materials I am working with – of course not with self-sufficient and sentimental Love but with the Love of the decision I took to use them, specifically. Because I love them I do not want and can not change them! Because I love them

I am committed and engaged with them, this is Love.

“Love” is also another word for passion, cruelty, infinitude and ecstasy and also universality.

“Love” means to me, to love someone: Duchamp, Bataille, Deleuze, Malevitch, Beuys, Warhol, Spinoza, Gramsci, Mondrian.

RB: Would you regard yourself as a militant? Of art? Of truth?

TH: I am not a militant of Art because I am an artist. I am the art maker! Art is my passion and I am passionate to be an artist. As an artist – I am a militant of Truth. I believe in the capacity of art to create – through its form its own Truth. A Truth as opposed to information, objectivity, circumstance, context, conditions, correctness, historicism, documentation, opinion, journalism, criticism, morality.

RB: Through the varied alcoves, monuments, kiosks, altars, festivals, emergency libraries you assert a series of ‘elective affinities’ with dead philosophers and dead writers. This is reminiscent of Bataille when he writes: ‘The desire to communicate is born in me out of a feeling of community binding me to Nietzsche, and not out of isolated originality.’¹⁰ Is this an ethical commitment on your part, to assert an ‘inoperative community’ with the dead?

TH: No, the explanation is much more profane. An “Altar”, a “Kiosk” and a “Monument” can only be done for dead people. But the “dead” in itself play no role in it, because my work is not about the death of that person, my work is about the life and the work of that person! As an homage to somebody it is simpler to take a person whose life and work are fulfilled. But, as an homage, it is not excluded – even if less simple – to do a work about the work of a living person. This year I will do an exhibition “Exhibiting Poetry Today: Manuel Joseph”. It will be about the work of a living French poet and a friend, Manuel Joseph, this exhibition can be understood of course as an homage.



Thomas Hirschhorn, "The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival", 2009. 'Running Events : Manuel Joseph, "5 Uncrested Readings"' Amsterdam, 2009. Photo: Vittoria Martini

¹ Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, edited by Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997), p. 183.

² Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, translated by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991), p. 40.

³ Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, translated by Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), p. 129.

⁴ Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, translated by Roy Brassier (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2003) p. 91.

⁵ Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso, 2009), p. 14.

⁶ Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, Alison M. Gingeras, Carlos Basualdo, *Thomas Hirschhorn* (London: Phaidon, 2004), p. 131.

⁷ Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, translated by Gregory Elliot (London: Verso, 2009), p. 17.

⁸ Robert Walser, 'Writing *Geschwister Tanner*', *Speaking to the Rose: Writings, 1912-1932*, selected and translated by Christopher Middleton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2005), p. 7-8.

⁹ Ernesto Laclau, 'Identity and Hegemony: The Role of Universality in the Constitution of Political Logics' in Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* (London: Verso, 2000), pp. 44-89.

¹⁰ Cited in Nancy, *Inoperative Community*, p. 4.