I trust you, I take you.

There were too many people and it was my first time in front of others, making work. At the time, what I called the Carl Andre dilemma, of words and precision, seemed our condition: so I inscribed two circles on the wall, using our largest salad bowl. Around one I wrote “I trust you” and around the other “I take you.” Then, at a table, I sat and drew the same onto envelopes, using a ballpoint pen and a drinking glass. Finally someone asked if they could have one, so I gave it to them, asking that they leave their signature in exchange for the sculpture.

1991. Four Walls, Brooklyn. Forty-nine people took envelopes and left their signatures. Framed documentation in the collection of the artist. Project can be repeated.

I need you.

While on the street, their time was to describe the space in between; their trust was to give me their signature and a means of contacting them. I fulfilled my promise by giving them the proceeds of the archive's sale. One participant put the check in a frame whereas another, who was living in a shelter at the time but had since moved on, never received his mail.

Archive began 1992. 9th and Broadway, 10th and Eighth Avenue, and Murray and Broadway. Four hours and forty-one minutes on the street. 750 catalytic tests given. Fifty-eight people stopped and spoke with me. Sixteen gave me their signatures and addresses, each being mailed a $50.00 check one year later. Project cannot be repeated. Archive in the Caroline Bourgeois Collection.

Kitchen Table.

I was washing dishes and needed to make dinner. Also, trying to get Social Sculpture, a beginning point for this project, to include the mundane, the accessible moments of maintenance and finding them that afternoon.

prospectus =


Fabien Hommet et Bernard Mourreau = superette LIVRUNIC, un projet CI-JOINT emplettes à la bibliothèque de Chatou-centre le samedi 25 mai entre 10h et 18h

Ensemble NORD SUD = programmation des musicales de Chatou samedi 22 juin à 16h30, 40 concerts dans toute la ville, le week-end du 21-22-23 juin

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Sophie:
- I was in the
  midst of a "preparing"
  midst of "preparing"
  who the meeting was about
  (All is fogginess)
- I'm reading a long poem now about
  "The song of the Seven
  Sages" - The young woman
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Sylvie
Hughes

just' a petit mot...

IT WAS
wonderful meeting
you!!

Ludica

Hence

(B + Michael = 18)

Sshhh archive 22.02.13 35:5
comme convenu, voici le profil de poste pour le stagiaire recherché.
Je vous transmets également le communiqué de presse relatif au travail de l’artiste et à l’exposition préparée.

**Objet = recherche traducteur simultané anglais / français**

Niveau souhaité et formation = bilingue anglais / français. Intérêt souhaité pour l’art

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Elles auront lieu environ mi-décembre. Ces rencontres se poursuivront par des correspondances par email donnant lieu à des traduction écrites Traductions écrites

Rémunération = convention de stage, 30 % du smic

Employeur = cneai = centre national de l’estampe et de l’art imprimé.
Centre d’art consacré au soutien des artistes et à la diffusion de l’art contemporain. Site : www.cneai.com

**communiqué de presse**

Ben Kinmont - conversations
1er février - 16 mars 2003

Une conversation peut-elle être une œuvre ?
Tour à tour éditeur, vendeur d’ouvrages anciens et artiste, Ben Kinmont vivant et travaillant à New York, dégage une réflexion sur le statut et la valeur de l’œuvre d’art. Vendeur de livres, il s’intéresse tout particulièrement aux pratiques de vies domestiques passées. Plusieurs catalogues de vente se font l’expertise de centaines d’ouvrages principalement axés sur les thèmes de la gastronomie avec Gastronomy, (trois catalogues), et du parfum dans Perfume (5 catalogues).
De même, artistiquement, il poursuit ce travail de collecte et d’expertise en éditant des textes et des contracts d’artistes soulevant le statut de l’œuvre d’art. « Promised Relations, or thoughts concerning a few artists’ contracts » réunit des contrats de productions et de distribution des œuvres d’artistes contemporains des années 60 tels que Marcel Broothaers, Ed Kienholz, Yves Klein... Ces textes révèlent la part importante des contextes
Sophie

You must send the press release to me in English before it is mailed because there are several mistakes.

For example, the project in Documenta was not "the third sculpture" but "moveable type no documenta."

Also, do you usually send it out 2 1/2 months before the event?

ben
Ben,

I have just corrected the mistake about documenta project. You can have a look on that new draft. You know, people ask for informations about your work and that text could help them to be involved in your project, although we are ahead of the exhibition.

I wanted to tell you, by writing that text, I understood many significant things in your work. I find many important actions that I support.

I am pleased to work on your project.

See You

sophie

Une conversation peut-elle être une œuvre ?
Tour à tour éditeur, vendeur d’ouvrages anciens et artiste, Ben Kinmont vivant et travaillant à New York, dégage une réflexion sur le statut et la valeur de l’œuvre d’art. Vendeur de livres, il s’intéresse tout particulièrement aux pratiques de vies domestiques. Plusieurs catalogues de vente se font l’expertise de certaines d’ouvrages principalement axés sur des thèmes du quotidien, la gastronomie avec Gastronomy, (trois catalogues), et le parfum dans Perfume (5 catalogues).

De même, artistiquement, il poursuit ce travail de collecte et en éditant des textes et des contrats d’artistes documentant le statut de l’œuvre d’art. « Promised Relations, or thoughts concerning a few artists’ contracts » réunit des contrats de productions et de distribution des œuvres d’artistes contemporains des années 60 tels que Marcel Broodthaers, Ed Kienholz, Yves Klein... Ces textes révèlent la part importante que prennent les contextes humains, relationnels et tangibles, lors de la création de l’œuvre d’art. Remontant à la génése du projet, il focalise sur l’acte déclencheur : la motivation, l’engagement qui naît d’un contexte de relation avec les autres, les objets, les idées, les institutions... C’est de cette même matière qu’il est question dans le Third sculpture, un projet d’exposition publié dans les Documents sur l’art.

D’autre part, depuis une dizaine d’années Ben Kinmont crée des actions avec des passants dans la rue, des prêtres, des familles... Récemment, à la dernière Documenta, des personnes rencontrées sur Kassel ont évoqué la chose la plus éloquente de leur vie dans le projet Moveable type no documenta. Une technique d’approche sensible et précise, permettant en second temps, de s’interroger sur sa valeur artistique. Ces conversations retranscrites sur ordinateur ont été imprimées, distribuées et exposées à la Documenta.


Cette expérience est prolongée à domicile avec vingt familles de Chatou à partir du 14 décembre, et se poursuivra par des correspondances. Le résultat de ces rencontres sera exposé au cneai du 1er février au 16 mars.

Basées sur la relation et la valeur que chaque personne accorde à l’art, ces projets se traduisent par le don d’objet sculpture : une éponge, une carte de visite, un vêtement..., témoignages de leur implication. Loin de poursuivre des objectifs d’interactivité avec le public, les dialogues provoqués sont de véritables procédures visant à mettre en application la fameuse formule de Broodthaers : " l’art est ce qui rend la vie plus intéressante que l’art". Testant au sérum de vérité ses propres vélicités à créer, les confrontations sont autant de protocoles au réel qu’il s’impose à lui même. Afin de renoncer à toute tentation de produire un art décrété et distingué du quotidien.
Sophie

I don't mean to sound angry with you personally and I thank you for the care you are putting into the project; you just must understand that I am very aware of the power of things in print and am therefore very careful about what is written. Once it is in print it is repeated again and again and is taken for truth (already a mistake that Documenta made in their catalogue has been reprinted three times despite my corrections).

Please ask a translator to translate it (or what about the mysterious Sylvie?).

I can read some French but I want to make sure that I understand what you are telling the press about the project and my past work. It is better to send nothing then something inaccurate.

Thank you for your help.

Ben

Immediate things:

Documenta should be referred to as Documenta 11.

Regarding the catalogues:
- there has been only one perfume catalogue
- there have been four gastronomy catalogues
- there is one other entitled "Life at home and in nature"

My projects have been realized in New York and Europe (not just New York)

My projects have been going on for the past 15 years (not just 10)

The things being given away during projects are called in English "gift sculpture objects"

I believe (though I may be wrong) that the quote at the bottom of the page is by Robert Filliou not Broodthaers (did you get this from my book?)
De: cneai <cneai@cneai.com>
À: ben kinmont <Bkinmont@aol.com>
Date: vendredi 22 novembre 2002 12:35
Objet: Re: new text

ben,

I totally agree with you. Every mistakes you find will be corrected. Sylvie should have a look on it. Of course, I am waiting for your agreement to send it to the press.
the cneai will be closed from 20th december to the 3st january.
De : Bkinmont@aol.com
À : <cneai@cneai.com>
Date : vendredi 22 novembre 2002 15:52
Objet : project description

Title: ssshhh

Project description: A family speaks about something meaningful.

Sophie:

What will happen is that twenty different families will speak together, in private, about something which is meaningful to them. It may also be something which is difficult for them to talk about, has been avoided, or is simply something special to them. The content and level of meaningfulness will be up to them.

When I arrive in December (exact date still to be determined) I would like to meet with the twenty families (perhaps it’s easier in the museum all at once) to explain the idea, describe some of my past work, answer any questions that they might have, and thank them for participating. It’s fine if only one representative of each family can come to the meeting. (If you can get twenty families just by word of mouth (and if they are also connected to the art world that’s o.k.) then we can simply skip placing the advertisement in the newspaper.)

For each family a print will be made and given to the family. These twenty different prints will be blank except for an engraving of the family’s name and the title of the project. The color of the print and it’s size will be determined by the space and desire of the family.

The print will not reveal anything regarding the nature and content of each family’s conversation. In this way the families’ conversations can remain private and something to be held and shared amongst themselves. Instead of a typical voyeuristic interest in the exhibition space, viewers to the museum will be asked to simply appreciate that some families had some conversations about something meaningful. By being quiet the print acknowledges the limitations of transposing an action, such as a domestic conversation, from one value structure into another: in this case from a home life to the art world.

Equally, perhaps, the print will become a family aide-mémoire for a conversation once had.
Nous sommes un centre d’art en région parisienne (Reuil-Malmaison, 20 minutes de
Chatel) et nous recherchons un stagiaire pour une activité de traducteur. Merci de
susceptibles d’être intéressés.

Merci de me confirmer que vous transmettrez cette annonce.

bien cordialement.

Sophie Auger

Objet = recherche traducteur simultané anglais / français

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habitants de Chatel. ((Vous trouverez le communiqué de presse ci-joint) les œuvres des
Elles se concrétisent par des rencontres en famille (ou au cneai) chez les personnes
volontaires. Il sera demandé à l’étudiant de traduire simultanément les conversations
entre l’artiste et les personnes rencontrées.

Nombre de personnes = environ 20
Elles auront lieu environ mi-décembre. Ces rencontres se poursuivront par des
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communiqué de presse

Ben Kinmont - ssshhhh
1er février - 16 mars 2003
Madame Querlen
Golf de l'Ile Flémier

le 4 décembre,

Madame,

Dans le cadre de nos programmes artistiques, nous accueillons un artiste près d'un mois dont le projet est de réaliser des actions avec des catonins. Ces actions basées sur des rencontres donneront lieu à la réalisation d'objets témoins qui seront exposés au CNEAI du 12 février au 9 mars.

Dans le souci de concrétiser ce projet en lien avec des professionnels de Chatou, nous serions heureux de vous voir assister au premier rendez-vous qui aura lieu le mercredi 18 décembre à 17h au CNEAI, durant lequel l'artiste abordera le sens de ses recherches et le projet qu'il envisage avec les familles. La seconde rencontre aura lieu le 19 décembre.
Sophie

how many families do you have organized to participate in the project so far?

And how would it be if I am at Chatou on the 16th and 17th (Monday and Tuesday)? On one of the days I would like to meet with representatives of all of the families in the exhibition space at Chatou. On both days I would like to meet with Herman and run some printing samples, be introduced to the process, etc. I would like him to have various paper samples to work with, including some which are colored (e.g. light blue, red, etc.).

Please let me know by the end of today if that seems possible as I have to buy the ticket and even discounted it is costing $675.00. Also, if need be, can CNEAI put me up in Chatou on the night of the 16th?

Thanks.

Ben
Dear Michael Lynch,

Thank you very much for articles. Experiences you proposed with students are so creative and interesting that I am sure you should be inspired by Batino of Ben Kirman. As I told you, the artists will proposed to the people to talk about the meaningful thing in their life. The meetings are on the 18th and 19th December. The one of the 18th is starting on 5 o'clock pm and is important to present the global project. I hope you will be with us.

See you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Yolande Auger
Dear ben,

About 15 families are ready to meet you. But I fear that many people would not be free for that days because it's during the week, and many of them are busy. Moreover, the studio could not be used the 16th and 17th. The first day, because of an etching course with adults, and the second day, because of the workshops with children and Herman. Another school is present in the space of the exhibition the morning of the 17th and I am in charge of the visit. On the other hand the week end of the 14th and 15th would be free. the 18th, and the 19th are free too, with Herman. Do you need him for the two days? During these days it would be possible to organised the meeting with chairs and table in a room of the house. Let me know what do you need me to prepare for that meeting.

About etchings = Colored papers don't exist for etchings, except cream. We have to print the color on the background of the paper. We have got many colors in the studio.

I am about to send the press release for journalists and press.

I am waiting for your reply.
Thank you,

sophie

cneai =
Ile des impressionnistes, 78400, chatou, france
tel (33) 1 39 52 45 35, fax (33) 1 39 52 43 78

http://www.cneai.com

De : Bkinmont@aol.com
sophie

I'll try to finish looking over the press release today that Sylvie sent me.

About the dates, how many of the families do you think could make it on the 18th or 19th if we were to have it in the evening?

My problem is that the absolute earliest I can leave NYC is on Friday the 13th, arriving on Saturday. I would rather not be too jet-lagged when I give my talk with the families so Sunday 15th is probably not a good day. However, if that is the only day that we can get all of the families there I will try to do it then.

In this case perhaps I would meet with Herman on the 18th and 19th (I do want two days with him to run tests).

What do you think?

Also realize that this flight alone is costing more than half of the budget you and Sylvie have given to this project. We still have the cost of the hotel and my return ticket in January/February for the opening, etc.

*****Please speak with Sylvie about this.*****

Thanks.
Your,
Ben
Ben,

Ok for shhhh. In french it would be "chhhh". We spell it as you do. The 18 and the 19th december would be good. From today, 9 persons will be here on the 18th from 5 o'clock, but we are wanting for 8 others replies. Some are ready to come on tuesday the 19th. Some want to come with their families.

Let me know if you have others questions.

sophie

cneai =

ile des impressionnistes, 78400, chatou, france
tel (33) 1 39 52 45 35, fax (33) 1 39 52 43 78

http://www.cneai.com

Dear Sylvie & Sophie:

Attached is the press release with the edits. Note the title is spelled with one "s" only (my mistake earlier):

shhhh

This is the typical way to spell it in the US. How would you spell it in France?

So that's it. Let me know if you have any questions and I will get back later today with flight info.

Yours,

ben