

Sshhh distribution, Chatou, CNEAI, 2003.

Dear Michelle, Elisabeth and Manu. Below is a description of the three pieces that I like to show as part of the 2014 Whitney Biennial. Each Three pieces proposed by Ben Kinmont for installation at the Whitney Biennial.

The three pieces I would like to present all relate to issues around the limitations of the art discourse and the various ways in which meaning and meaningfulness are created in areas to which art and artists are not invited. At the end of the list below is the original Sshhh project description as well as a text I wrote for the Pompidou's Voids exhibition (curated by Matheiu Copeland et al.). I am including them here in the hope that the two texts will provide a context for the way in which the three pieces are interconnected with each helping to inform the other.

and how
there are
some
places

an effort to clarify these points as well as further explain the

1. I would like to exhibit the Sshhh archive and reactivate it for the Whitney Biennial. Below are notes regarding its installation, reactivation, inventory list, and costs.

Installation:

handling,

- The archive will be placed into a vitrine which will be openable (or left open) for handling by visitors to the exhibition.

Sshhh project
I have appended

The second is a short text I wrote for

The first in the original proj. description for Sshhh as it appears

Handling: During the exhibition part or all of the archive will be available for handling by visitors to the exhibition

- A wall text will be screened onto the wall. This wall text can be one or a combination of the following: the archive's inventory list; the invitation to the public to participate in the project; and/or the project description.

Reactivation:

- The specifics of the reactivation of the project still need to be discussed, but one option is as follows: visitors can email me their names and the date of their conversation and I will then print their name(s) on a sheet of paper. The printing will be letterpress and the distribution back to the participant could be through the post. Then one copy of each conversation print as well as its letterpress form of lead type will be added to the archive during the exhibition.
- In Chatou, we had a reception (a casual dinner was provided) for the participants so that they could all meet each other and pick up their prints. This was very nice but I'm not sure if that would work so well at the Whitney. I am, however, open to discussing this as an alternative to using the mail for the work's distribution.

Distribution:

- An inventory list of the archive could be given away during the exhibition and could include the "Our contract" text (see *Prospectus* appendix) as well as the project description. In this scenario, it would be photocopied and distributed for free as an Antinomian Press publication.
- Alternatively, the inventory list could be on the Whitney website with html links to scans of the individual archive items through each item's inventory number. In this version we would have the website somewhere in the space (on a card to be taken away, or simply screened onto the wall) and we wouldn't have to photocopy the inventory list and keep it replenished during the show. It would also be a means to allow people to download and print elements of the archive.

Costs:

- The archive needs to be processed (it has never been exhibited before) and archive materials purchased.
- The ~~archive~~ ^{vine} needs to be fabricated. ^{made from it can be done either} This can possibly be done by the Whitney team, but we would need to discuss this. Otherwise, it could be fabricated by my team here in California. (This would then have the additional cost of shipping, however.)
- Fabrication of the letterpress forms, purchase of paper, printing of the sheets.
- Possible postage for distribution of the printed sheets.
- Scanning of the archive elements.
- Construction of the inventory list and archive web page on the Whitney's website.
- The wall text mentioned above. I am imagining that this would be quite large.
- Possible photocopying of the inventory list (onto white paper, stapled in one corner and distributed for free to visitors during the exhibition).
- Shipping and insurance of the archive to and from California.

we need to find or make a vine

my fabricators here in CA.

Her only trouble in calling it art was that she didn't want or need anyone to know about it. 2005.

Description: A white canvas measuring approximately 36 x 24 inches. On the canvas is glued a piece of paper with the above sentence printed onto it. Above this slip of paper (roughly 1 x 7 inches), are the remains of a piece of canvas hinging tape, as though someone had removed an art work and the tape remained.

Installation:

Simply hang the canvas up on the wall.

Costs:

Shipping and insurance to and from California.

On becoming something else, a film. 2013.

Description:

A film of interviews with artists who have become something other than artists through the pursuit of their art practice. SFMOMA is in conversation with me over the terms of a contract to produce such a film. The film's purpose would be pedagogical: on one level to affect public policy in regards to arts funding by showing that the attrition rate of artists from the arts needn't always be interpreted as a failure, ~~instead~~ the pursuit of an art practice can lead one into other professions for very good reasons (both for art and to the benefit of that new profession). The film will be edited and produced in a form that can be utilized by teachers and available for free download and distribution. (For more on the background on this project, see the original *On becoming something else* project described in *Prospectus*.)

The film will show examples of how

Installation:

Included in the Whitney film schedule.

Costs:

Unknown ⁹⁰ but little to none; depends upon the terms currently being negotiated with SFMOMA. If we come to an arrangement then I will need to confirm that it is ok to screen it at the Whitney (I wouldn't think that this would be a problem so long as SFMOMA launch it first).

es

Texts:

Sshhh , 2002-present

I was wondering about the fragile meanings created at home and how one can create work about, or in reference to, these delicate moments without their destruction.

So I invited people living in Chatou to have a conversation in their home, amongst themselves, and to consider the possibility of this conversation as a work of art. Before, in the museum, I spoke about past projects and historical precedents for conversation as sculpture. The families who participated then went home, each later notifying me by email to say when they had had their conversation. The content and nature of each conversation remained a secret known only to them.

Afterwards, I made each family an engraving. The plate's impression on the paper was blind with the exception of the family's name and the date of their conversation. At my request each family chose the size and color of their engraving and four impressions were made of each: one for the participant, one for the museum, one for the Bibliothèque Nationale, and one for myself.

The engraving does not document the content of the conversation. It tells only that there was a conversation had by a family on a certain day. However, it does function as an art object, as something to be exhibited and which can circulate within the art world. For those within the family, the engraving is more; it comes out of a domestic moment and functions as an aide memoire for a conversation once had.

Archive begun 2002. 23 families participated. Centre national de l'édition et de l'art imprimé, Chatou, France. Project can be repeated. Prints in the collections of the families, CNEAI, Bibliothèque Nationale, and the artist.

BK 2010

The art world is not invited.

Some artists bring new ideas, participants, and locations into the art discourse. These artists change the matter of the art world and in so doing satisfy the art world's appetite for the new. But there is no guarantee that the art world has understood or even savored what it has consumed. This phenomenon of absorption, not surprisingly, seems to be happening with increasing rapidity, even with confrontational practices such as institutional critique.

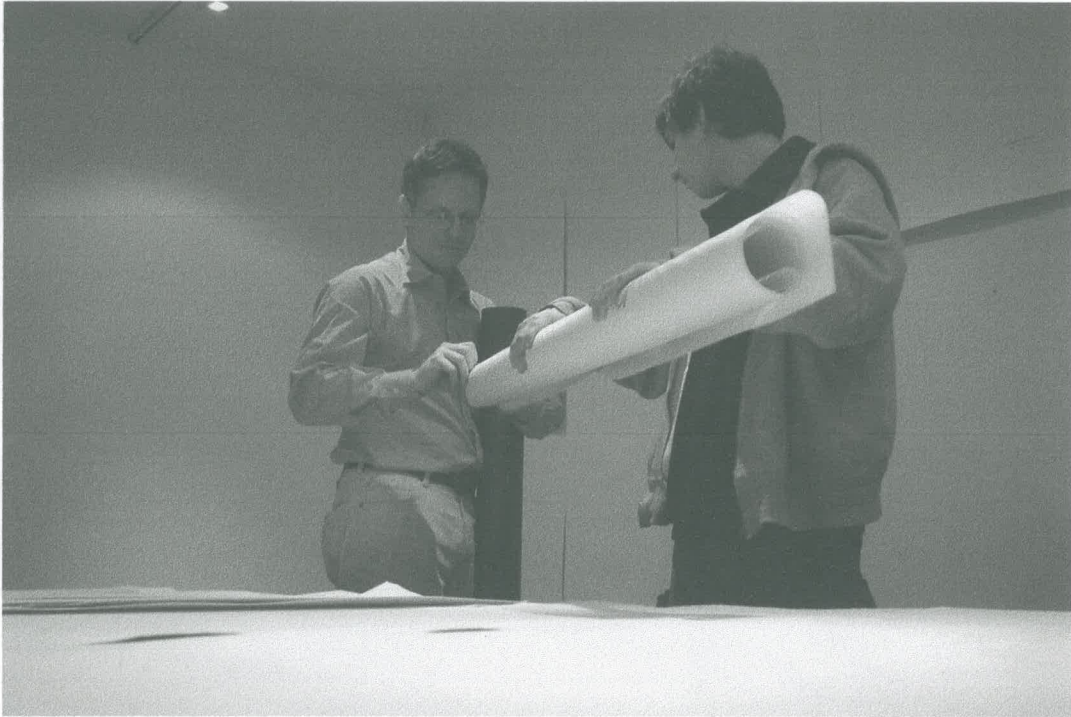
As new people, places, and ideas from outside of the art world are brought into the art discourse, ethics come into play due to the disjunction between value structures. Examples might include Christo's conflict with the California Coastal Commission during his Running Fence project (1972-76); Tim Rollins work with KOS (Kids of Survival) in the South Bronx (begun 1984); and more recently Rirkrit Tiravanija's work Demonstration Drawings (2007), a collection of drawings commissioned by Rirkrit and based upon pictures of political demonstrations found in the Herald Tribune. All of these projects reach out to new people, places, and ideas and yet raise concerns around authorship, objectification, and purpose.

Alternatively, one can try to understand that which is not included while simultaneously accepting that it will never be brought into the art discourse. This is to say that some art practices can lead an artist out of the art world and into an idea, group, or place where the value structure of the art discourse cannot

follow and the art world is not invited.

For myself, this is an indication that a project has become something else. The acute difficulty is in trying to understand what it means and whether or not to communicate the content of that experience to others, and if so, to whom. From the viewpoint of the departing artist, when looking over one's shoulder back at the art world, there is a sensation of closing a door and accepting that departure. From the viewpoint of the person entering into something new, there is the question of how to sustain this practice and find value in one's work.

BK 2008



Sshhh distribution, Chatou, CNEAI, 2003.

Three pieces by Ben Kinmont for installation at the Whitney Biennial.

- attach the uninvited text
- Sshhh also a bit

proposed

I would like to exhibit the **Sshhh archive** and reactivate it for the Whitney Biennial. Please see the original project description below (followed by a ~~list of~~ installation, reactivation, distribution, and cost concerns).

notes regarding its inventory list

Sshhh

I was wondering about the fragile meanings created at home and how one can create work about, or in reference to, these delicate moments without their destruction.

So I invited people living in Chatou to have a conversation in their home, amongst themselves, and to consider the possibility of this conversation as a work of art. Before, in the museum, I spoke about past projects and historical precedents for conversation as sculpture. The families who participated then went home, each later notifying me by email to say when they had had their conversation. The content and nature of each conversation remained a secret known only to them.

Afterwards, I made each family an engraving. The plate's impression on the paper was blind with the exception of the family's name and the date of their conversation. At my request each family chose the size and color of their engraving and four impressions were made of each: one for the participant, one for the museum, one for the Bibliothèque Nationale, and one for myself.

The engraving does not document the content of the conversation. It tells only that there was a conversation had by a family on a certain day. However, it does function as an art object, as something to be exhibited and which can circulate within the art world. For those within the family, the engraving is more; it comes out of a domestic moment and functions as an aide memoire for a conversation once had.

Archive begun 2002. 23 families participated. Centre national de l'édition et de l'art imprimé, Chatou, France. Project can be repeated. Prints in the collections of the families, CNEAI, Bibliothèque Nationale, and the artist.

Installation:

- The archive will be placed into a vitrine which will be openable (or left open) for handling by visitors to the exhibition.
- A wall text will be screened onto the wall. This wall text can be one or a combination of the following: the archive's inventory list; the invitation to the public to participate in the project; and/or the project description.

Reactivation:

- The specifics of the reactivation of the project still need to be discussed, but one option is as follows: visitors can email me their names and the date of their conversation and I will then print their name(s) on a sheet of paper. The printing will be letterpress and the distribution back to the participant could be through the post. Additionally, the forms of lead type for each conversation will be added to the archive during the exhibition as well as a copy of each print.
- In Chatou, we had a reception (a casual dinner was provided) for the participants so that they could all meet each other and pick up their prints. This was very nice but I'm not sure if that would work so well at the Whitney. ~~(Also, I normally don't do these kind of interactions within the Museum, but we can talk about possible options for the prints' distribution.)~~

Then one copy of each conversation print as letterpress

well as the letterpress form

of lead type if all sets will be included

it

Inventory List

Distribution:

- An inventory list of the archive will be given away during the exhibition. This list could also include the "Our contract" text (see Prospectus-appendix) as well as the project description. It would be photocopied and distributed for free as an Antinomian Press publication. Alternatively, the inventory list could be on the Whitney website with html links to scans of the individual archive items through each item's inventory number. In this ~~scenario~~ ^{version} we would have the website somewhere in the space (on a card to be taken away, or simply screened onto the wall) and we wouldn't have to photocopy the inventory list and keep it replenished during the show.

could discussing this as an alternative way to using the mail on the distrib.

In this scenario, into which paper (probably about 10 pages)

it would also be a means to allow people to print elements of the archive. download of

Costs:

• Fabrication of the letterpress forms, purchase of paper, printing of the ~~etc~~ sheets screened onto the wall

- The archive needs to be processed (it has never been exhibited before) and archive materials purchased.
- The vitrine needs to be fabricated. This can possibly be done by the Whitney team but we would need to discuss this. Otherwise, it could be fabricated by my team here in California. (This would then have the additional cost of shipping, however.)
- The wall text mentioned above. I am imagining that this would be quite large.
- Photocopying of the inventory list (onto white paper, stapled in one corner and distributed for free to visitors during the exhibition).
- Shipping and insurance of the archive to and from California.
- Scanning of the archive + ~~uploading~~ constructing a page on the Whitney's website for its access.

Possibly possible postage in distribution

2. Her only trouble in calling it art was that she didn't want or need anyone to know about it.

Description: A white canvas measuring approximately 36 x 24 inches. On the canvas is glued a piece of paper with the above sentence printed onto it. Above this slip of paper (roughly 1 x 7 inches), are the remains of a piece of canvas hinging tape, as though someone had removed an art work and the tape remained.

Installation:

Simply hang the canvas up on the wall.

Costs:

Shipping and insurance to and from California.

On becoming something else, a film.

Description:

A film of interviews with artists who have become something other than artists through the pursuit of their art practice. SFMOMA is in conversation with me over the terms of a contract to produce such a film. The film's purpose would be pedagogical: on one level to affect public policy in regards to arts funding by showing that the attrition rate of artists from the arts needn't always be interpreted as a failure. Instead, in some cases, the pursuit of an art practice can lead one into other professions for very good reasons (both for art and to the benefit of that new profession). The film will be edited and produced in a form that can be utilized by teachers and available for free download and distribution. (For more on the background on this project, see the original *On becoming something else* project described in *Prospectus*.)

Installation:

Included in the Whitney film schedule.

Costs:

Unknown but little to none; depends upon the terms currently being negotiated with SFMOMA. If we come to an arrangement then I will need to confirm that it is ok to screen it at the Whitney (I wouldn't think that this would be a problem so long as they launch it first).

Harvard

SFMOMA

"Sshhh"

I would like to exhibit the "Sshhh archive" and to activate it for the Biannual.

Costs: archive needs to be processed and materials purchased, and main vitrine needs to be fabricated. This can be done by the Whitney team according to specifications which I will forward on. Photocopying inventory list. Shipping insurance to and from Calif. wall text, each on a separate sheet.

Installation: archive will be placed into vitrine which will be openable for handling. Wall text, screened on, inviting visitors to participate in activation.

Distribution: An inventory list of the project will be given away which could also include the project description and "Our Contract" text. This would be a photocopy of Autonomian Press publication. On white paper.

Reactivation: visitors can email me their names and the date of their conversation.

The printing will be letterpress and the date of their conversation will be through the distribution will be through the vitrine low enough for visitors in wheelchairs.

The lead forms of the names will go into the archive as well as one copy of the print. If not letterpress then as a drawing w/ carbon paper by me on demand. But I very much like the idea of the lead forms in the V. the J. also, the formality of their production is somewhat nice.

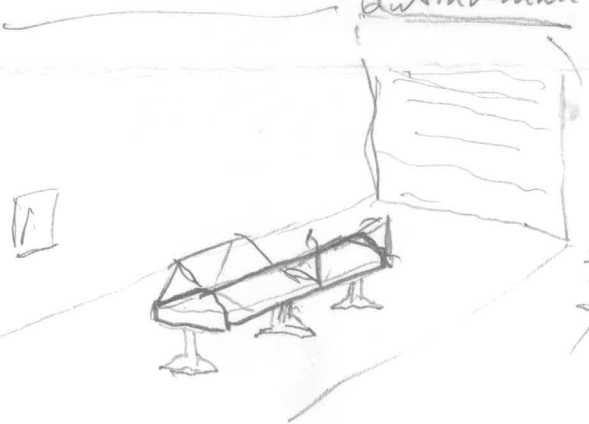
"Her only trouble in calling it art was that she didn't want or also, need anyone to know about it"
Costs: Shipping + insurance from CA.
Install: As canvas piece, hung on the wall.

On becoming something else, a film.

A film of interviews with artists who have become something other than artists through the pursuit of their art practice.

Costs: unknown; little to none.
Installation: Part of the film series.

or Watercolor stencil for borders + letterpress name.



pale blue paper
red ink.